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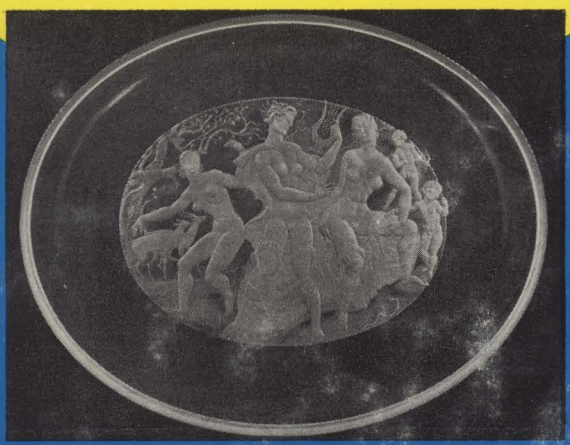
Swedish Glass



Elisa Steenberg

SWEDISH GLASS

BY

ELISA STEENBERG

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH
BY LILLIAN OLLÉN

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Modern Swedish glass is acclaimed throughout the world. It was one of the first manifestations of "changing tides" in Sweden's culture, and reflects the spirit of a people "sailing in a fair wind." The glass tableware, ornamental vases, and urns appeal particularly to visitors, and are the valued gifts which the traveler takes home.

Few persons are as initiated in the modern and ancient aspects of the Swedish art of glassmaking as the author of this book, Dr. Elisa Steenberg. She is the daughter of the distinguished Orrefors artist, Edward Hald, and was brought up on the famous Orrefors estate. Although Dr. Steenberg, who is essentially a scholar, has devoted herself to research and study in the various arts and crafts, her main interest has been glass, its historical development, technical progress, and evolution in design. In this discussion she describes more than five centuries of glassmaking in Sweden. For material covering the period up to the end of the eighteenth century, the author has drawn largely on the studies of Dr. Herbert Seitz, a noted historian. The chapters pertaining to nineteenth-century glass and the coming of age of modern Swedish glass are based on Dr. Steenberg's original research, much of which appears here in print for the first time. She tells the story of Swedish glass vividly for she has lived in the heart of its development.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Elisa Steenberg has throughout her life been exposed to the subject of glass, its designing and craftsmanship. She grew up on the Orrefors estate, a name familiar to all who are aware of fine glass, and there her curiosity was aroused as to the history of glass in her native land, its development through the centuries, the foreign influences that touched it, the techniques ancient and modern which formed it, and finally its present-day condition and future movement in Sweden. Dr. Steenberg's research, which has included the study of other arts, has stressed glass. It has led her to foreign study and to foreign publication. This book is a distinguished contribution by a distinguished historian in the field of glass.

Olaus Magnus [sixteenth-century Swedish historian.—Translator] relates in his *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* that until the 1550s objects of glass were not yet in general use, and explains why. Glassware was "not suitable for Swedes who easily become violent under the influence of strong drink; they would consider it amusing to smash their glasses causing splinters to fly about which could easily sever tendons and sinews and not only render limbs useless but cause instant death. Such risk and danger is not incurred with pine mugs."

A change came during the reign of King Gustavus Vasa. In 1555 he summoned two Italian craftsmen to Sweden to make glassware for use at the royal court. This was the beginning of domestic manufacture. The Vasa kings and the influential nobles built several glassworks during the decades following, some in Stockholm and its environs and some on their country estates. These very early glasshouses, over which foreign glassmakers presided, are known to posterity mainly through the research of the historian, Herbert Seitz.

In the sixteenth century, one other notable glass manufactory was established and known as Duke Karl's Works in Nyköpingshus. Excavations at the site have revealed many articles made nearly four centuries ago. Among them are fragmentary pieces from a set of tableware probably ordered some time between 1579 and 1589 for the Duke and his Duchess, Maria of Pfalz. The

1. Fragments of goblet made for Duke Karl of Sweden. Circa *1580. Nyköping Museum.*

set is of clear dark green glass decorated with a signetlike monogram. The forms closely resemble German designs of the period. In fact some of the pieces are exact copies of wine glasses, goblets, and other drinking vessels then in vogue in Germany.

A glassworks erected in the seventeenth century on the Bergkvara estate of the noble Gyllenhielm family at Trestenshult, in the province of Småland, has also become known through the pieces excavated there. From Trestenshult, six different types of objects have been reconstructed from fragments found on the site, mainly flasks and jars, but also an octagon-shaped glass which above the base becomes cylindrical. Around the bowl are glass threads. It is possible that this particular type originated in Holland, as there is a similar glass in Rembrandt's self-portrait with his wife, Saskia. According to a local tradition, the Trestenshult works employed Dutch craftsmen, and this would account for the influence.

In spite of these early works, whose products were bought by the wealthy, glassware was not much more important in Sweden for most people during the seventeenth century than it was during the Middle Ages. Each family continued to make its own wares, and there was really no market for manufactured goods. Among the nobles and landed gentry, however, luxury wares came into more general use, but they were mainly imported. Foreign craftsmen also began to come to Sweden in increased numbers during the seventeenth century. Some founded glassworks which were usually located near the larger cities so as to cater to the families of means.

German craftsmen were leaders in the Swedish production of glass during the seventeenth

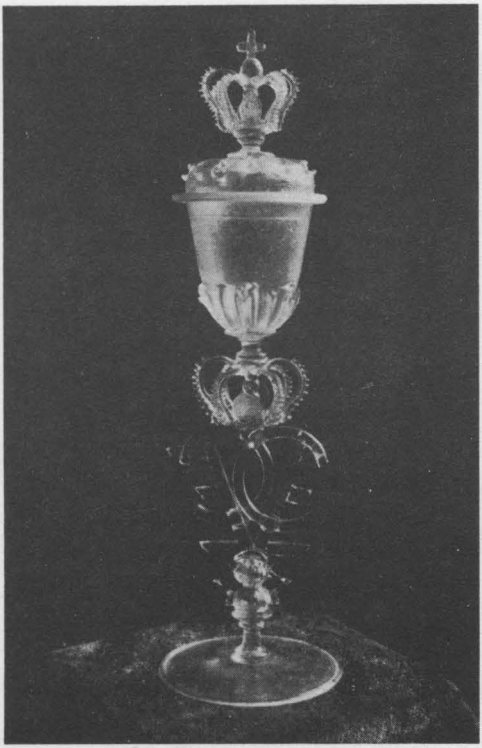
was later known as the Kungsholm Glassworks. Worries and reverses took their toll, and in 1678 Jung died, his dream not yet reality.

There is no glass preserved which can, with certainty, be traced to Melchior Jung's Glassworks. In 1670 complaints were made about its poor quality and the fact that it was more expensive than imported glass. But even if Jung did not always put an artistic and technically perfect product on the Swedish market, his glassworks must be respected as a significant contribution to Sweden's cultural history, particularly because he introduced the art of glassmaking to native craftsmen.

Scapitta proved to be a poor head for the company. He did not make accountings of money or materials to his financial backer, and in 1678 wisely decided to leave the country. The company continued under the leadership of Balthasar Grill, director of the mint in Stockholm and manager of the Sala silver mine. As time went on, the production of glass proved more and more profitable, but in 1686 the city authorities decreed that because of fire hazards the works could not remain in the Clara quarter. They were therefore moved in 1688 to a small island near Kungsholmen, a more remote borough of the capital. Glass manufacture continued at the Kungsholm Glassworks until 1815, when it closed down. More will be said later about its production, which is considered the highest quality glass made in Sweden during the eighteenth century.

During the early 1700s the Swedish glass industry suffered in the general depression which settled over the country in the reign of the warrior king, Charles XII. Import duties were reduced to eight per cent and consequently quantities of foreign glassware, mainly German, flooded the country. When peace with Russia had been restored, glassmaking benefited from the government's efforts to revitalize the industry, and in 1727 import tariffs were raised once more. This helped domestic manufacture considerably.

In 1700 there were only two glassworks in Sweden. In the 1740s two more were founded—

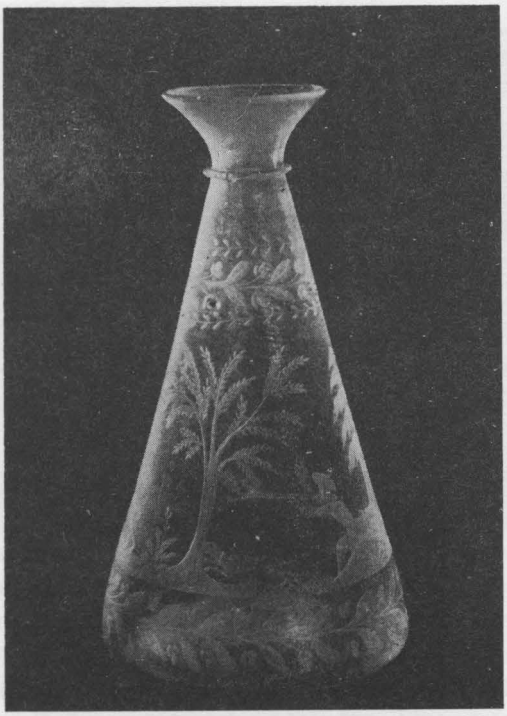


2. Chalice in Venetian style with stem-forming monograms of King Charles XI and Queen Ulrika Eleanora the Elder. Kungsholm Glassworks. National Museum of Sweden.

Limmared and Kosta. Toward the end of the eighteenth century some ten more were established. Unlike those founded in the seventeenth century, these were erected out in the country, often in the forests where fuel was accessible.

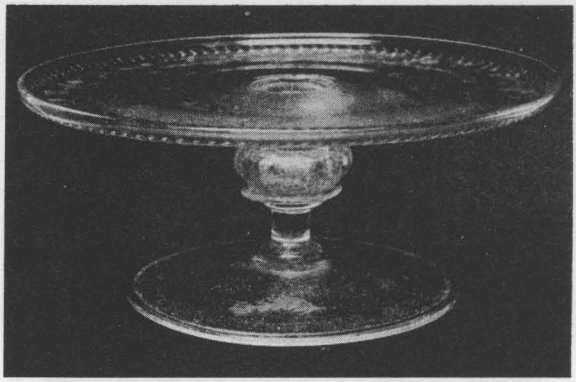
3. Goblet with stem of flattened spheres. Kungsholm Glassworks. National Museum of Sweden.

Although nearly half the new works closed down before 1800, due to a still unstable demand, the art of glassmaking developed to a marked extent during the eighteenth century, and changed from a rather exclusive handcraft to an industry ready to play a vital role in the economic life of



4. Conical carafe engraved with a forest scene. Kungsholm Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

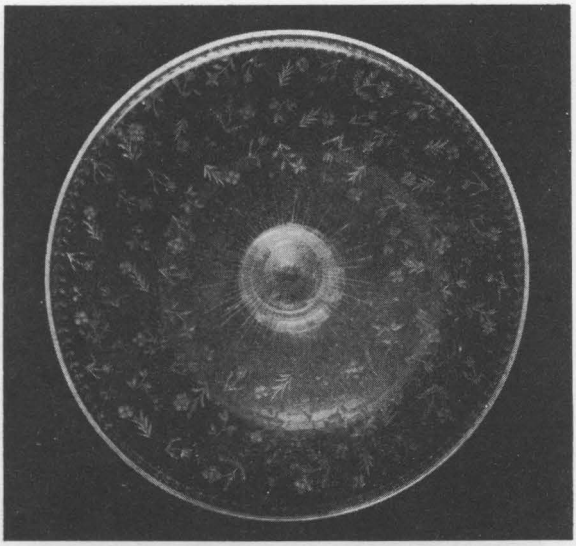
the nation. It is true glass continued to be mainly a luxury, but there was a widening and an increasing variety of articles. The Kungsholm works produced both useful and decorative wares, and smaller works made pieces of household glass which found their way to the people.



5. Plate for wine glasses with floral engraving. Kungsholm Glassworks. Röhs Artcraft Museum, Gothenburg.

At Kungsholm various types of drinking vessels were produced—goblets, wine glasses on high stems, including *"roemers"* (a sturdy glass for Moselle), chalices, cups, and plain tumblers. The goblets and wines made during the first few decades were usually modeled on Venetian designs. Craftsmen and workers became famous for their skill as glassblowers who could make graceful goblets with artistic stems fashioned as monograms or in other ornamental designs. Late in the seventeenth century new inspiration came from the Netherlands, Germany, and England. The handsome goblets of this period were often set on stems of blown spheres alternating with round discs.

Among "pouring vessels" one particular type



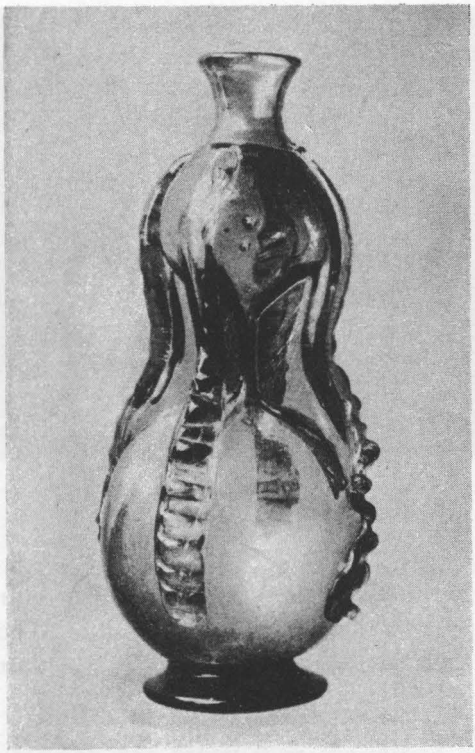
6. The same cakeplate seen from above, showing details of design.

can be considered purely Swedish, since it has been found but rarely outside, and then it can usually be traced back to Sweden. This vessel is a conical decanter with a widened mouth and a glass ring around the neck. One variation has a spout and handle. Among the bowls and plates of the Kungsholm Glassworks one plate for wine glasses on a standard is probably of Venetian design, while another tureen-shaped piece set on a spherical foot was probably copied from porcelain tureens.

A pouring vessel which became decidedly popular during the eighteenth century was a brandy

7. Brandy flask with monogram of King Gustavus Adolphus IV. Probably from Limmared Glassworks. Museum of Gothenburg.

flask, usually designed with a short neck on a square body and a glass ring at the mouth. These square flasks were probably popular because they could easily be packed in baggage and travelers' chests. Great numbers were sold, mostly to the lower and middle classes, who consumed



8. Brandy flask of a German type. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

spirits in large amounts, and so found this bottle handy, especially for aquavit, which was distilled by the Crown as well as privately and of which there was no lack.

Other aquavit bottles were oval or of two spherical sections connected by thin glass tubes

9. Engraved dram glasses used for wine at the end of the eighteenth century.

which caused a clucking sound when the aquavit was poured. In the eighteenth century this bottle was valued as a curiosity as well as for practical purposes.

About 1750 there came into use for wine the tapering dram glass, probably of Hessian or Lauenstein origin. The form varied from a high-stemmed type to a bowl resting only on a foot, and there was also the so-called Hessian wine glass with a conical bowl. This was popular until the early nineteenth century.

Also dating after 1750 is a covered bowl—a bonbon or butter dish—reminiscent of a seventeenth-century type, which the Germans described as a "Deckelschale mit gekniffenen Verzierung,"

10. Hessian-type goblet from the second half of the eighteenth century. Kosta or Limmared Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

and a vessel with a pear-shaped body, long narrow spout, and handle. These pieces usually called teapots reflect oriental and Venetian designs. They were, however, so delicate and breakable that they were not manufactured very long.

The quality of Swedish glassware was meanwhile improving. Instead of concentrating on

11. Covered butter or bonbon dish of hand-blown glass. End of the eighteenth century. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

unadorned handworked glass, manufacturers began to engrave it and also decorate in other ways. Just when engraving was introduced into Sweden is not known. The antiquarian, Gustav Pazaurek, believes that Swedes participating in the Thirty Years' War brought the first engraved glass back from the Continent. He mentions an engraver, Anthony Seifferd, as active in Sweden in the early 1650s. Research also indicates that the engraver, Elias Horn from Dresden, worked in Stockholm in the 1660s. Indisputable exam-

12. Covered bowl ornately engraved. Late eighteenth century. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

ples of their art have not, however, been preserved.

It is unlikely that the art of engraving was practised at the Kungsholm works in the beginning. Indeed, it can be assumed that while Venetian styles dominated, there was little or no engraving. But in the 1690s there appeared a craftsman of German birth, Kristoffer Elstermann, and it was probably he who introduced engraving. Other engravers, mostly German, followed

13. Bowl or wine glass with monogram of Queen Hedvig Eleanora. Kungsholm Glassworks. Royal Palace, Stockholm.

Elstermann at the Kungsholm works during the first half of the eighteenth century. Later the engraving staff dwindled, and glass after 1850 appears of considerably lower quality.

The cutting of glass on a wheel was begun at the Kungsholm works in the 1730s, but it was limited to flat diamond cutting and flutes on the stems of goblets. Elstermann's ornamental style was followed by the Kungsholm works during the period of its prominence. The engraved glass produced there until the death of Elstermann in 1721 was considered of high artistic quality, although it never acquired international reputation.

14. The same bowl seen from above.

The engravings were linear and not deeply cut. The principal motifs were coats-of-arms or monograms surrounded by laurel leaves and palms. Glass with the royal arms, although often ordered by royalty, was sometimes similarly engraved for other families to denote the monarch reigning at the time of manufacture.

Monograms on Kungsholm glass are an aspect of the highly developed international art of monogramming in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. From famous masters such as

15. Engraved chalice with motif of crossed palms on the base. Kungsholm Glassworks. Privately owned.

the Dutchmen Cletcher and de Winter, the Englishman Marlow, and others, letter designs etched in copper found their way to European countries. This lettering was faithfully copied for

16. Goblet with engraved cartouche with inscription "La Perfection." Kungsholm Glassworks. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.

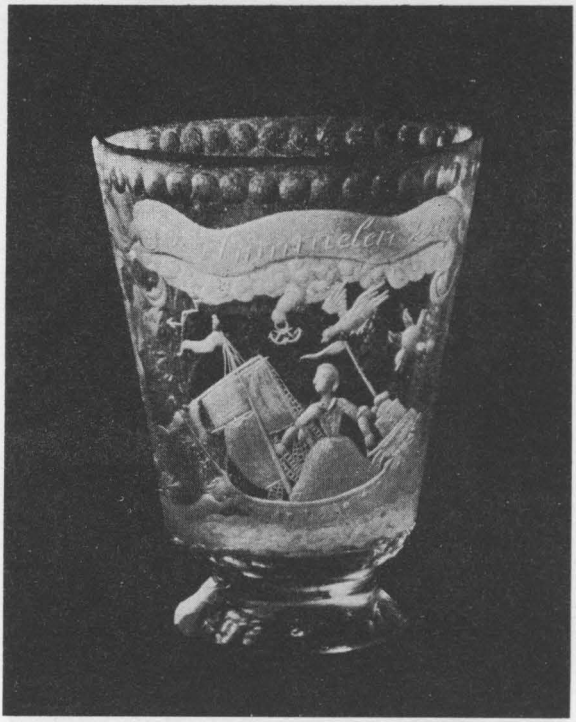
monograms on all media. On the glass made for Queen Lovisa Ulrika, the monogram clearly shows Cletcher's fine hand. Even individual monograms were often copies from these internationally designed masterpieces.

17. Wine glass with scattered floral engraving. Kungsholm Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

The palms and laurel wreaths surrounding monograms were common symbolic ornaments in the late baroque period and were probably first used on glass by the Nuremberg masters, Heinrich Schwanhardt and Herman Schwinger. On many Kungsholm pieces the motif is minutely

18. Rummer with scattered floral design. Kungsholm Glassworks. Privately owned.

designed, as on the Queen Hedvig Eleonora bowl. On the bases and lids of goblets, the palm motif appears differently, the branches being separate with the palms crossing the laurel wreaths or with two palms crossing each other. A graceful, decorative effect was sometimes achieved by engraving a laurel garland in three



19. Engraved wine glass with inscription, "M.D. As Heaven Decrees!—v. Mecke." Kungsholm Glassworks, 1741. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

curves around the foot of a glass. Heraldic coats-of-arms were seldom surrounded by palms and laurels; instead traditional leaf designs were used.

Motifs of fruit garlands and clusters, reminiscent of the Renaissance, were also popular toward the end of the seventeenth century and into

20. Covered goblet engraved with sun motif. The Latin inscription around the rim reads: "Vivat Magister Jacobus: a ; Melle Pastor : St: Maria in Lybeck." (*See* illus. *21.*)

the eighteenth, and were frequently joined by an irregularly shaped rosette. Kristoffer Elstermann often ornamented a service with scattered flowers, sometimes as the main decoration and sometimes to fill out a central motif. These scattered

21. Around the bottom of the bowl is inscribed in German: "Solches wunschet. B.B. Stockholm September 9 Anno 1717." Kungsholm Glassworks. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.

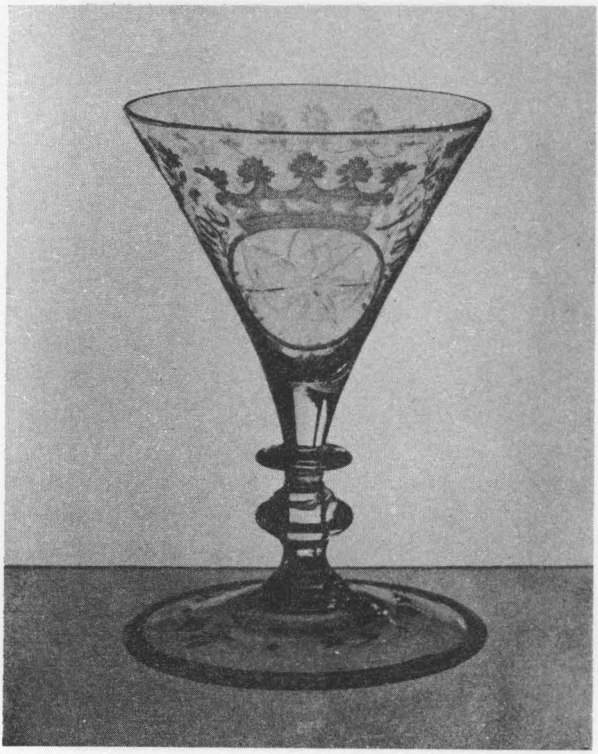
flowers disappeared after the Carolinian period. This motif also is of international origin, and can be traced to the seventeenth-century decoration of baroque flowers.

Different kinds of leaf borders were used. The

22. *Goblet engraved with the North-Star motif. Kungsholm Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.*

simple wreath of leaves or the graceful garland of rosettes around the base of a goblet originated in Nuremberg. Only rarely did figure motifs or forest and hunting scenes appear.

On Kungsholm glass also appeared two distinctive designs of the sun and the North Star.



23. Engraved wine glass. Kungsholm Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

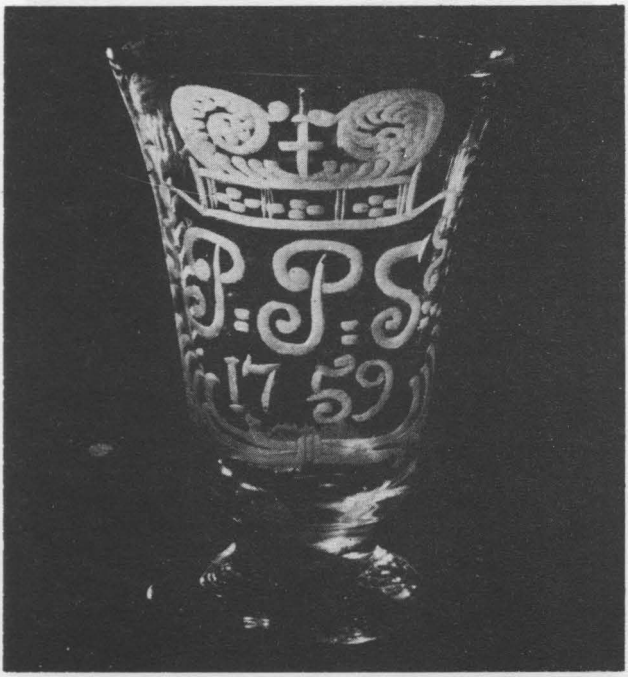
The sun motif, also from Nuremberg, was simplified by Kungsholm engravers. The sun usually appeared as a disc surrounded by an aura with a scalloped edge. Sometimes it was the only decoration, sometimes a complement to a landscape, or there were flowers strewn around the periphery of the sunbeams. The sun design is a

III. SCANIAN GLASSWORKS, 1695–1762

Kungsholm inspired other works, the earliest of which was the Scanian Glassworks, built in 1695 on the Henrikstorp estate in the province of Scania. The glass turned out here was often faintly tinted yellowish green and the forms, although showing Central European influence, had local characteristics, as the so-called drinking cup, which was a wine glass resting on a base and sometimes made with a beveled edge. Other pieces like the conical decanters were apparently modeled on glasses from Kungsholm.

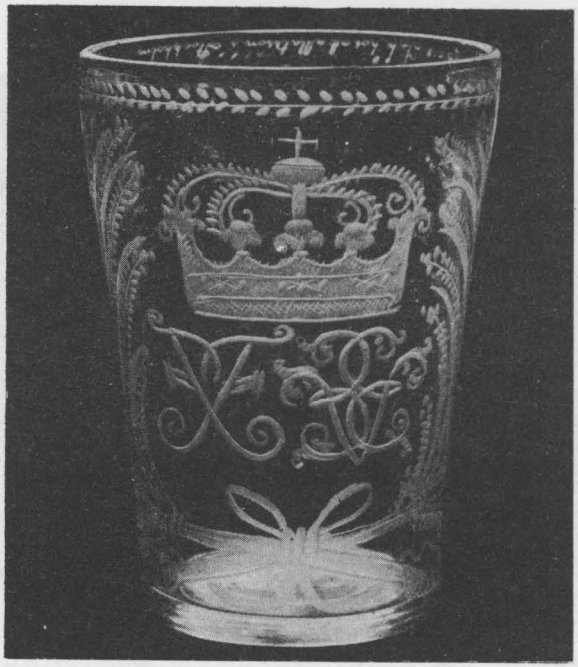
As early as 1700, engravers with Swedish as well as foreign names began to be employed at Scania. The decoration shows again the influence of Kungsholm, except that the sun and North-Star motifs were not used. Rosettes, initials, or monograms surrounded by palms and laurel, and cartouches reveal, however, an engraving technique far below that of Kungsholm, probably because the Scanian works had a less discriminating clientele.

One ornament is characteristic of the later decoration at Scania, a bird, used as the central



24. Drinking cup inscribed: "Drink moderately," and initialed "P.S.," 1759. Scanian Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

motif or as a contra-motif to monogram or initials. A typical design shows two birds on a heart facing each other. Such bird motifs were also common in South German glass of the period. Sayings were also popular: "What can not love do," "Your skoal, my friends," "Drink becomingly," "Drink moderately," and "Bottoms up" –further proof that Scania's customers were quite different from those of Kungsholm.



25. Tumbler bearing monograms of King Fredrick I and Queen Ulrika Eleanora the Younger. Scanian Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

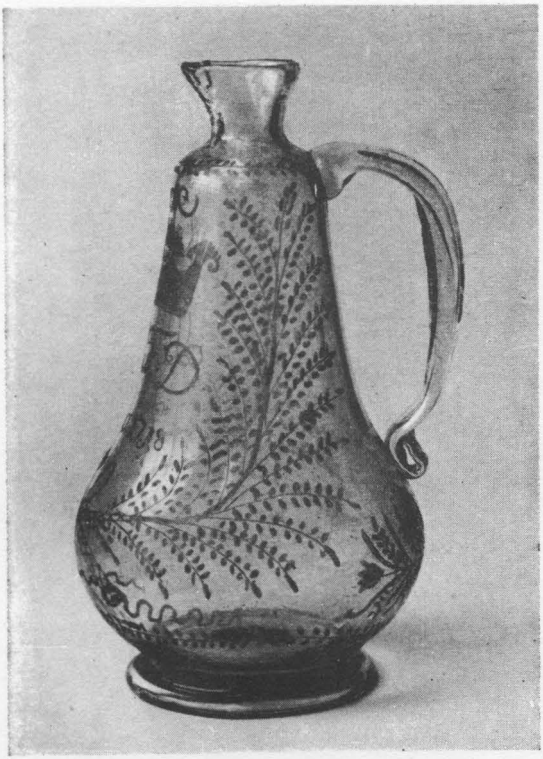
26. Engraved bird motif on bowl. Probably from the Scanian Glassworks. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

27. Bowl of goblet decorated with North-Star motif and bearing inscription "Limmared Glass-works—May 24, Anno 1744." Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

IV. KOSTA, LIMMARED, AND OTHER GLASSWORKS

Other Swedish glassworks employed engravers during the eighteenth century, among them Limmared, Kosta, Cedersberg, Kasimirsborg, Gothenburg, and Strömbeck. From Limmared several valuable engraved pieces have been preserved. Dating from 1744 is a goblet which in decoration and technical perfection can be favorably compared with Kungsholm products. During this year the engraver Hans Wentzel Goba, formerly with Kungsholm, came to work at Limmared. At Kosta was employed the glass designer, Hans Johan Gerner, a son of craftsman Elias Gerner of Kungsholm. The wine and drinking glasses with engraved leaf borders preserved from that time were probably his creations. At the other manufactories, eighteenth-century engravings are reminiscent of the baroque style originally adopted at Kungsholm.

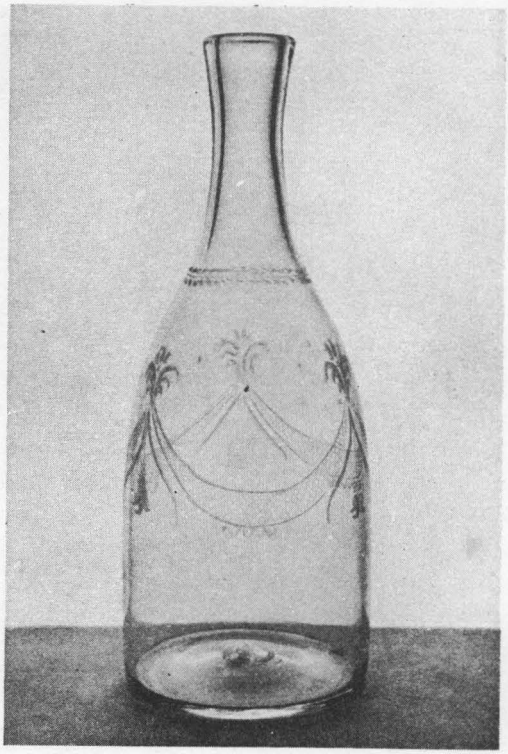
Although the finer eighteenth-century Swedish glass was inspired by foreign craftsmen, many of the period designs were short lived, particularly the complicated and artistic patterns of the Vene-



28. Pitcher engraved with leaf motif, initialed "C.M.E.D." 1718. Nordic Museum, Stockholm.

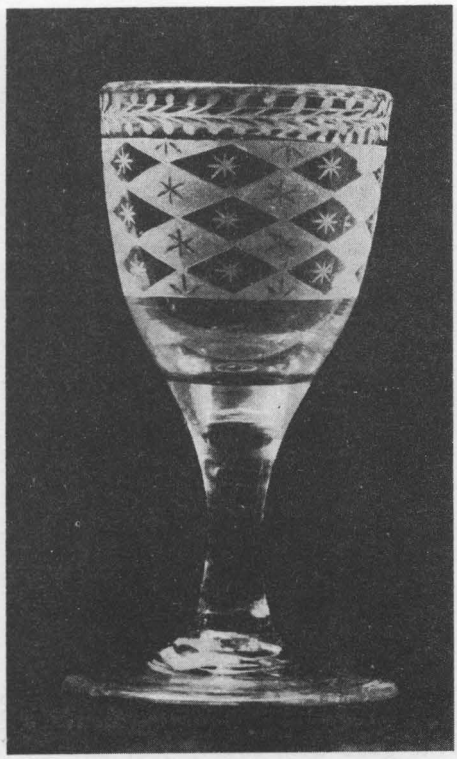
tians, for Swedish development was toward simplicity and grace.

In England the so-called crystal or lead glass, a more refractive metal than that formerly used, had been perfected in the 1680s. Many new shapes and decorations followed the new process. These soon found their way into Europe, but not until



29. Pin-bottle or engraved carafe from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.

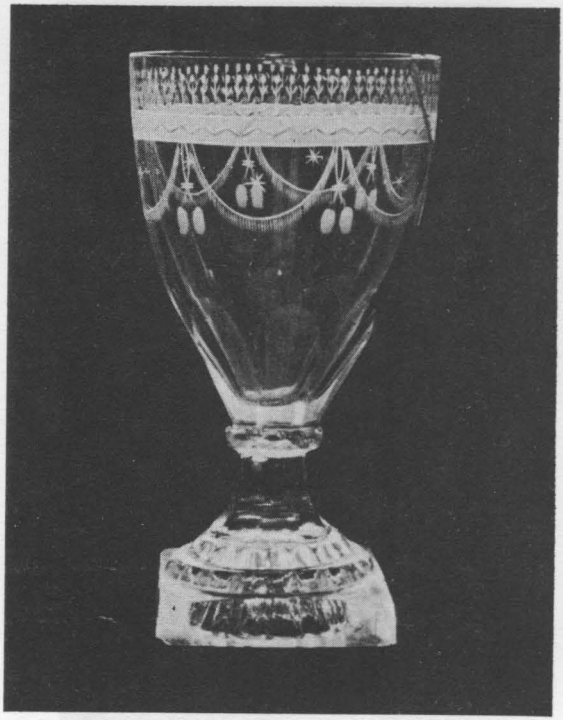
the time of Gustav III, 1770 to 1800, was English influence noticeable on Swedish glass. Then were introduced the pear-shaped and conical decanters which had appeared in England after 1750, the wine glasses with truncated egg-shaped bowls, the wines with square bases, and the covered sugar or potpourri urns with high egg-shaped bowls,



30. Wine glass with truncated egg-shaped bowl and engraved chessboard design. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.

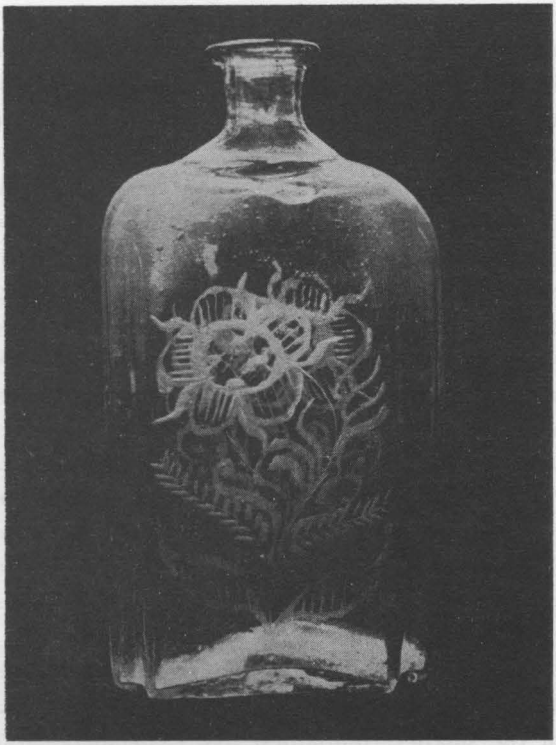
low stems, and round or square bases, forms characteristic of the Empire period. Gradually, however, ornament gave way to a new classic simplicity. Decoration consisted mainly of band and border ornaments, festoons and leaf garlands, rosettes and ribbons.

At Cedersberg the late and post-Gustavian style



31. Wine glass with square foot and engraved festoons below a floral border. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.

was reflected in floral designs and small ornaments symmetrically arranged. At Kasimirsborg the typical chessboard pattern was used with the checks alternately polished and dull. Sometimes a star was engraved in each polished square. Even when these engravings were not technically perfect, they were charming. Along with highly



32. Brandy bottle with rustic floral decoration. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.

developed forms there were also at this time rustic floral designs engraved on the brandy bottles and glasses, which were so popular.

No new technical developments appeared at the beginning of the nineteenth century and styles also continued almost the same as at the close of the previous century. When a general

depression settled over the country, it affected the industry, and the finer decorated glass was no longer produced. The art of engraving had begun to decline even during the last decades of the eighteenth century.

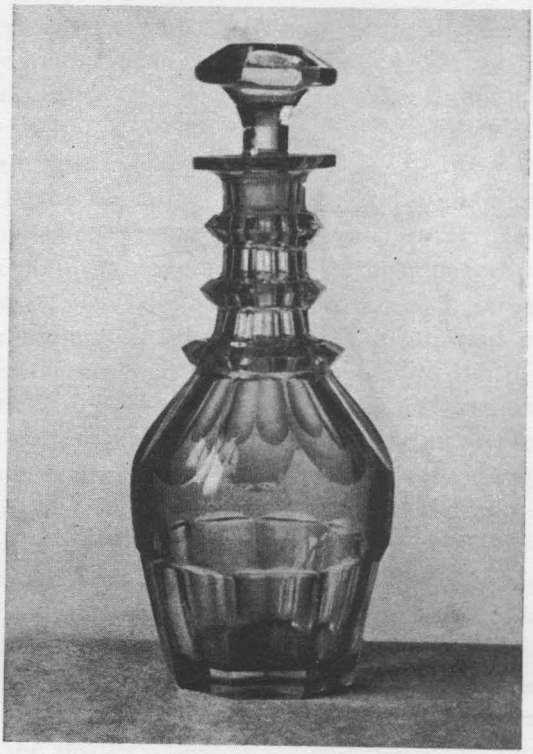
In the 1830s there were better times and glass production was soon again in full swing. New methods were introduced for the manufacture of pressed glass, and quality improved with cutting techniques. The process of pressing instead of blowing made possible the manufacture of many articles in glass—small plates, dishes, and "candle-safes" [small discs placed under candles to prevent damage from dripping wax—Translator]. Now more utility wares as well as ornaments appeared and the decoration on pressed glass conformed, more closely than that on blown, to the style of the time. Today many historical trends may be traced in it.

The cutting of glass was introduced at the Kungsholm works in the 1730s. In the 1790s some of the smaller companies, like Cedersberg, also turned out cut glass. In the 1830s and '40s cut decorations became fashionable, especially on wine glasses and decanters. On the whole these were patterned after English cut glass of the period. In style they belong to the Empire period, although they remained in vogue in Sweden until the 1880s.

The growing popularity of cut glass did not, however, mean that there was no engraving. The variety of products turned out during the 1830s

33. Pressed glass. Kosta Glassworks Catalogue, 1855.

was about the same as at the turn of the century. This is evident in the catalogues of the time. In Kosta's price list we find listed under White Glass: "Wine glass, brandy glass, liqueur glass, sherbet glass, water goblet, punch glass, beer glass, mugs, drinking glass, decanters, jam and jelly dishes, sugar bowls, and butter dishes." In addi-



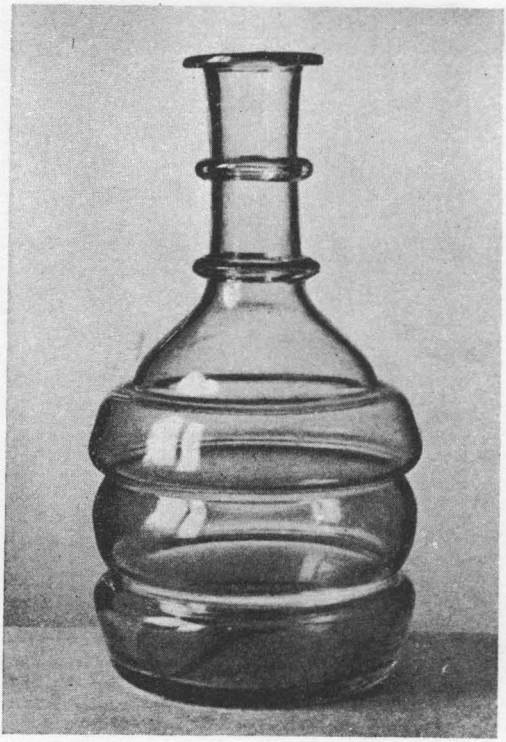
34. Cut glass decanter. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1850. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

tion there was manufactured all kinds of jars, bottles, inkwells, hourglasses, and other semitechnical objects.

Among the decanters were "decanters with rings" and "barrel-shaped decanters." The models were English and the basic form a conical "pin bottle," now of more practical form, easier

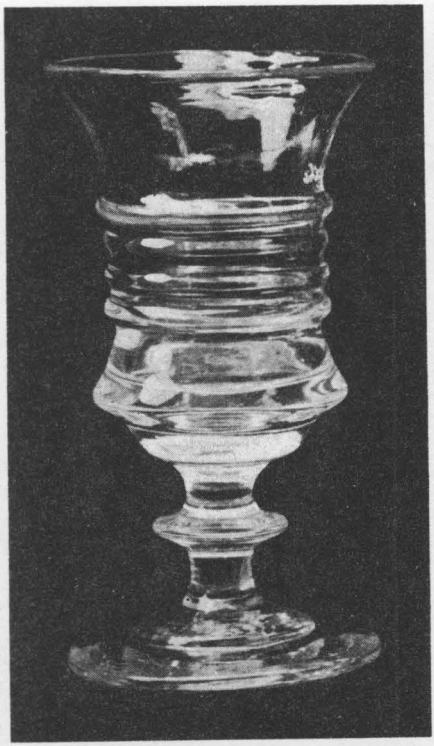
35. Cut glass goblet. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1850. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

to hold and pour. Among drinking glasses a new style appeared, the "sheriff glass," also called the "curved glass," with a waisted bowl, and with or without rings around the middle. A few urn-shaped bowls appeared with low stems and covers. In contrast to earlier types, these were patterned after silver bowls and suggested Empire styles.



36. Ring-necked carafe. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1850. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

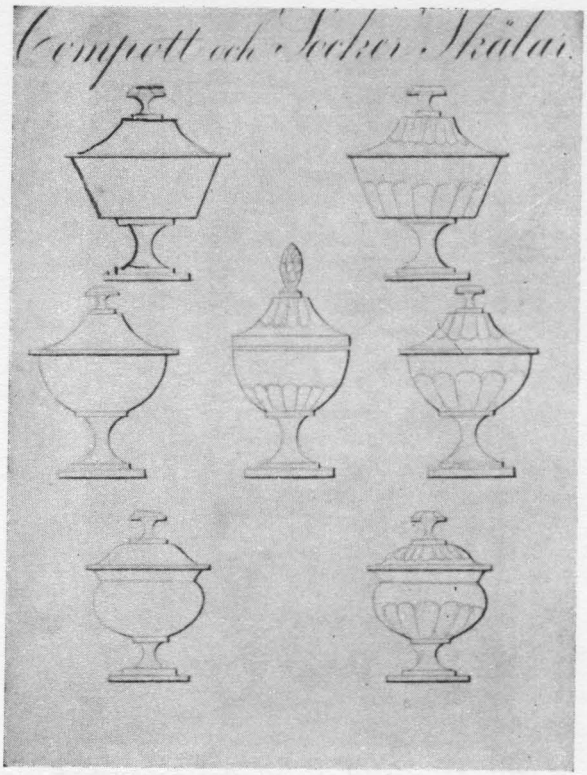
The middle of the nineteenth century was significant for the glass industry in Sweden, with marked progress both technical and economic. Several new glassworks were founded and during the first half of the century, some eleven new shops were established. Of these eight had to shut down. In the 1850s, seven new concerns



37. Ringed wine glass with flared mouth. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1840. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

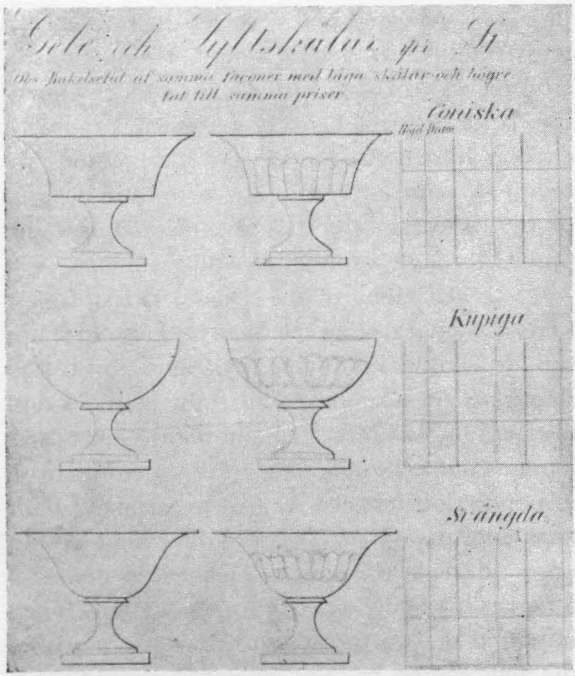
sprang up, of which only one had to close down, and in the '60s nine more were established of which all but two soon closed.

The new glassworks established during these decades were often owned by the workers, many of whom received financial backing from wealthy



38. Models for compotes and sugar bowls. Reijmyre Glassworks Catalogue, 1853.

landowners. Most of the factories were erected in the province of Småland, where fuel was easily accessible, as were skilled workers. But again, reverses came. Those works which lacked financial support had a hard time competing, and about one-third of the smaller ones founded between 1850 and 1900 lasted but ten years.



39. Compotes for jelly and jam. Reijmyre Glassworks Catalogue, 1853.

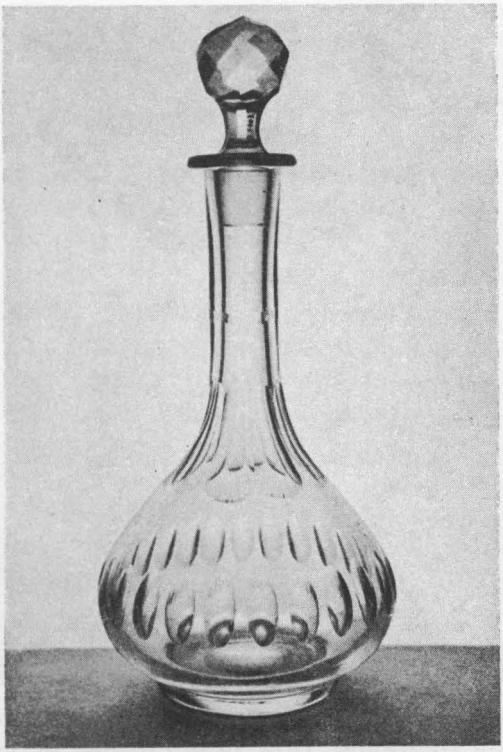
After 1850 a few Swedish glassworks began to adopt new techniques which helped to stabilize the industry and make possible competition with imports. The introduction of the Siemen regenerative furnace and the general adoption of "cracking-off" methods in the manufacture of stemware considerably increased production. By this process, the half-finished piece was allowed to cool; then the bowl of the glass was scored with a diamond cutter to proper size. When the

piece was reheated and revolved in front of intensely hot flames, issuing from horizontal slits in a cylindrical coke-pot furnace, the sudden expansion of the narrow band of excess glass caused a circular fracture at the cutting mark. This procedure was introduced at Kosta toward the end of the 1880s; in the '90s the method was improved through a special air-and-gas mixer.

Until well along in the 1800s articles of glass were sold by traveling salesmen and also in shops run by glassworks. When it became possible to ship glass by steamboat and train in the 1850s, distribution was increased and many new outlets found. Competition among retailers and increase in population resulted in growing demand both for inexpensive pressed glass and for high-quality wares to replace imports. Meanwhile domestic concerns continued to copy foreign designs. They imported sample pieces, studied catalogues from the glass centers of Europe, and also watched all developments of style in England.

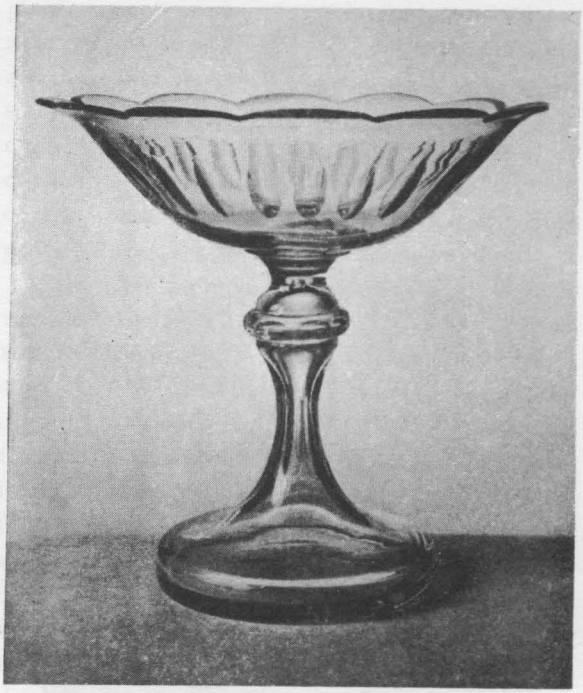
At the Reijmyre Glassworks, founded in 1808, and the largest in Sweden by the middle of the nineteenth century, the number of items manufactured was doubled between 1848 and 1853, when the catalogue listed 536 articles. New models as well as new products were turned out. There were practical pieces for the home which were also in a way luxuries—shaving bowls, cake platters, and ornamental toilet articles—all of which had previously been imported.

Of the new models which came into vogue



40. Gourd-shaped carafe with cutting. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1870. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

about 1850, many originated in Belgium. There the craft had so advanced that the glass was competing with the English in the world market. Belgian influence was seen, for instance, in a pump-shaped decanter with a long, narrow neck and in a bell-shaped bowl set on a high stem.



41. Compote on high stem with scalloped rim. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1870. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

The borders of glasses and bowls were cut and ornamented with scallops and graceful curves. The union of the decorative and the useful distinguished household articles. The wine glass, for example, now had a simple tulip-shaped bowl set on a smooth, straight stem.

At this time the oval-cutting "olives" became popular. It went well with gourd-shaped decan-

42. Vase in ivory-white glass with painted floral decoration. Circa *1870. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

ters and the curved lines of bowls on high stems. It was more graceful than the straight-cut panel. Simultaneously, there was more engraving, although it was not so popular as cut decoration. Kosta introduced, for instance, a service of thin glass with scattered flowers engraved over the

43. "Juno" cut tableware in parallel-rib pattern. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1890. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

surface. Along with the utility wares, there was an insignificant but steady production of decorative glass. Glazed, often ivory-white, vases with hand-painted floral decorations were in demand.

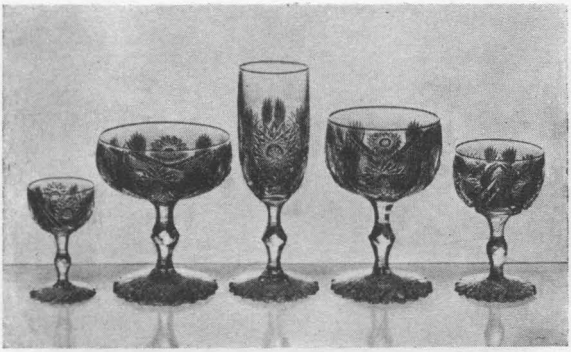
After the depression of the late 1880s, Swedish glass production took on new life, but craftsmen continued to follow Belgian and French designs until the '90s. Then the English influence was marked, as England's glass industry developed to a high degree. Low manufacturing costs, however, made it possible for Swedish glass to compete in European markets and quantities of Swedish pieces were made in English patterns for export to Britain and her colonies.

English cuttings were both simple and intricate. There was a parallel-rib pattern used as a border around the bowl of a piece of glass and a simple diamond-cut motif often combined in elaborate designs typical of the "luxury sets" of the '90s. This festive crystal was described in 1882 in *Idun,* a Swedish weekly: "Crystal and more crystal in the most artistic designs sparkling like diamonds and reflecting all the colors of the rainbow—that is the most elegant decoration adorning fashionable tables of today. Jardinieres, saladieres, aspic and fruit bowls should be of crystal, as should flower vases, champagne glasses and wine decanters. Sparkling cut glass is especially effective with flowers and gives any table a magic touch of beauty."

V. ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

As Sweden became industrialized and secured a place in the international market, Swedish glass competed successfully, but it lacked national character and only reflected such new foreign designs as those of Gallé and Tiffany. A review of the exhibits in 1897 by L. Loostrom in the *Magazine of the Society of Arts and Crafts,* 1898, read: "Swedish glass can easily, as far as clearness, brightness, and quality are concerned, be favorably compared with foreign glass. What it does lack, however, is originality in design, one might say in fantasy. To remedy this defect, we wish that our glassworks would do what our porcelain works have done, namely employ artists to breathe new life into their products." It was not long before manufacturers heeded this advice. Their first interest was to produce elegant pieces like those of Gallé and Tiffany. However, they cared more for national prestige and the development of a national school than for true aesthetic values.

The first artists to devote themselves to development of Swedish glass were Gunnar G:son Wennerberg (Kosta), Ferdinand Boberg (Reij-



44. Matched cut tableware. Kosta Glassworks, circa *1890. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

myre), and Alf Wallander (Swedish Crystal Works). In etched and cameo glass, Wennerberg designed vases in the style of Gallé. The motifs were usually flowers of reddish purple, blue, or brown in relief against a faint background of green or white. Ferdinand Boberg's vases were executed in opalescent or clear glass with an etched design. Alf Wallander's pieces became the last expression of the Jugend Period of art glass in Sweden. [The Jugend Period, 1896–1910, was characterized by trends in design and interiors which originated in Germany and emphasized simple, utilitarian styles.—Translator.]

Along with the vogue for cut glass and the interest in ornamental art glass, a new concept of design came into being for utility glass. H. A. Ring reviewing the Paris Exposition in 1900 wrote: "The section of the exhibition which is

45. Bowl in etched overlay glass with brownish yellow flowers against light green background. Gunnar G:son Wennerberg. Kosta Glassworks, 1901. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.

devoted to a display of techniques and models and their adaptability to daily life shows a cultural advancement which is a credit to its creators." The mere mention of "adaptability to daily life" is evidence of the new concepts of design.

Two decades passed, however, before there were practical results. At the Baltic Exposition in 1914 no new developments were in evidence and in *Varia,* a publication of the Swedish Society of Arts and Crafts, Erik Wettergren wrote: "Still ruling is cut glass with its splintered light, both in the elaborate gilded and handcrafted

table services and in the simpler pieces. Only rarely could one see large plain surfaces molded into a noble form reflecting light in harmonious play."

In 1917 a Home Show was held, which can be considered a turning point for Swedish glass. By this time, first-rate artists were attached to the larger works, and the Swedish Society of Arts and Crafts had been reorganized with the hope of bringing manufacturers and artists together to bring beauty to useful articles. Pioneering artists in this field had a broad concept of their art, which accounts for its many-faceted nature in Sweden. Now a perfect relationship of art and technique developed which inspired artists to make more beautiful glass.

VI. ORREFORS GLASSWORKS

Pathfinders in this renaissance of Swedish glass were Simon Gate and Edward Hald of Orrefors, and Edvin Ollers of Kosta.

At Orrefors, which was established in 1726 as an ironworks, bottles and window glass had been manufactured since 1898. The property included valuable forest lands and on this account appealed to Consul Johan Ekman of Gothenburg, who bought it in 1913. The new owner took an immediate interest in the glassworks on the estate and realized that its products were far below practical and aesthetic standards of the times. He was one of the first industrialists to turn to the Swedish Society of Arts and Crafts for help in securing an artist to raise the quality of his glass. Simon Gate came to Orrefors in 1916 on the initiative of Albert Ahlin, the managing director. In 1917 Edward Hald joined the staff on recommendation of the Society.

The Nordiska Kompaniet, a department store, featured a display of Gate's designs in 1917. Decorative pieces, which included a type of en-

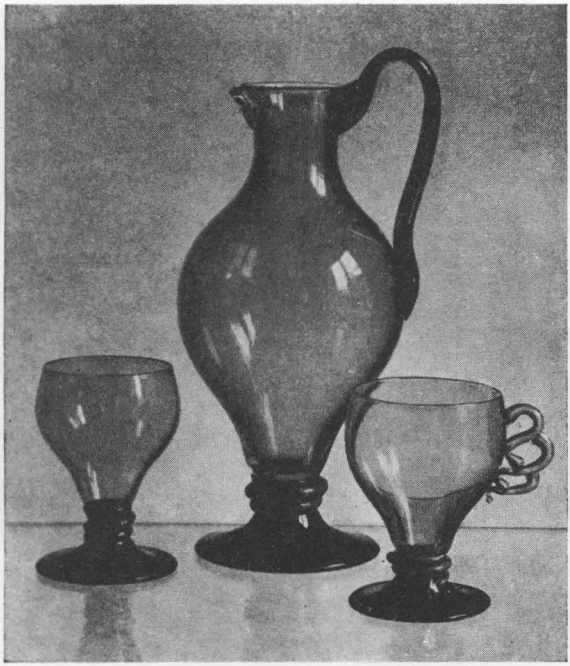
46. Graal glass with blue and brownish gray decoration. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1917.

graved glass known as Graal, were shown, as well as useful articles. The Graal glass was described by Erik Wettergren in the N. K. catalogue for the exhibition as "purely ornamental, with a discreetly blended tone, and flower decoration reminiscent of the French cameo glass of Gallé and Daum, although it differs in not being cut in relief. Although somewhat naturalistically decorated and a bit too sweet in color, the vases

shown are considerably better than the cameo glass of declining quality which had emerged from other Swedish works, and there is a new inventiveness in the form." The Graal technique, which involved a number of cooling and reheating procedures, appealed to artists. In it they found an excellent medium for experiment with forms, decoration, and color. [Graal glass is a type of overlay and consists of several layers of glass of different colors but organically united.—Translator.]

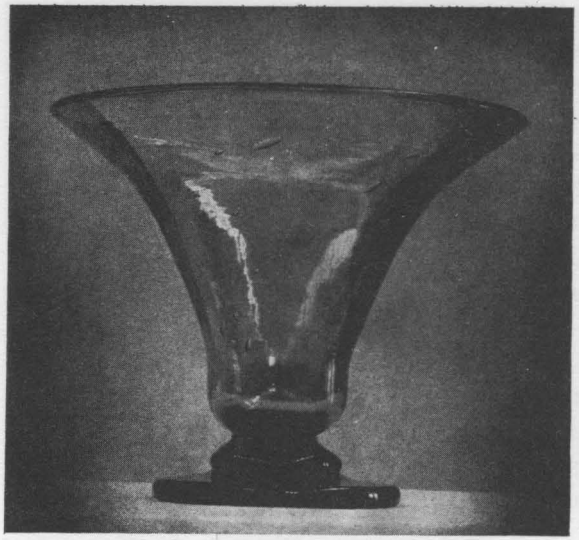
The utility glass displayed at the N. K. exhibit also had a new character. Gate had avoided excessive cutting. He had concentrated on plain, unadorned glass. Included were also some examples of tinted glass, sometimes ornamented with applied trailings.

At the previously mentioned Home Show held in 1917, where Gate, Hald, and Ollers were represented, the new trend was even more in evidence. The Orrefors artists had made some inexpensive pieces with a sulphate ingredient, a wartime product, in simple hand-blown glass with trailings and burls as sole decoration. Even Ollers' Kosta-ware had a different character. There was no gilded and cut glass. His glass was tinted green or blue and was full of bubbles and other defects, but it was distinguished by natural charm and originality. Unfortunately with a demand for technical perfection this particular line was discontinued, and the strong promise of the early work of Ollers was not fulfilled.



47. Carafe and glasses in reddish brown with green coils above black bases. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1916.

In the development of the new Swedish art glass, artists were aided by skillful glassblowers at both Orrefors and Kosta. Among Orrefors' master-blowers first mention goes to Knut Bergkvist who had worked with Gate in developing the Graal glass technique. Knut Bergkvist left Orrefors for Strömbergshyttan, but his brother Gustaf and master-blowers Carl Svahn, Rudolf



48. Hand-blown vase in green-toned glass. Edvin Ollers. Kosta Glassworks, 1917.

Kraft, and Axel Fransson are maintaining the Orrefors tradition of skilled craftsmanship.

The reputation of modern Swedish glass rests, however, not on Graal but on engraved glass. As early as 1917 both Hald and Gate were experimenting with it. There were no skilled engravers and the first pieces were rather crude interpretations of the artists' pencil sketches. The engraver's wheel did not etch the design deeply enough; more often than not it merely suggested the original as it skimmed over the surface of the glass. But within five years a group of engravers

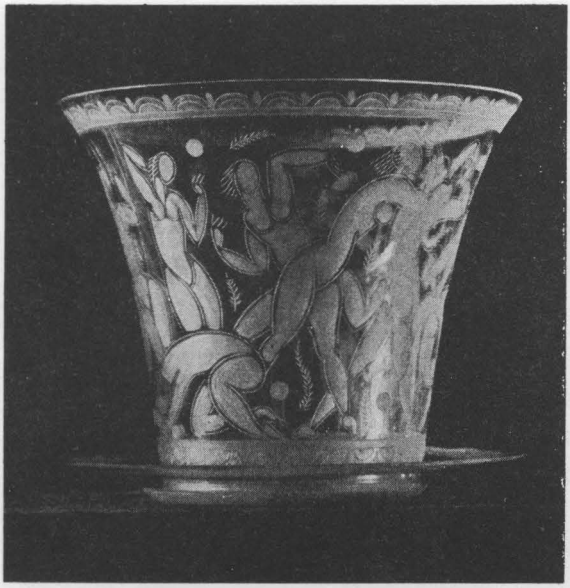
under the leadership of Gustaf Abels grew skilled in the craft.

In the 1920s, when the demand for engraved glass had increased considerably, a group of Czechoslovakian engravers came to Sweden and were employed at Orrefors. Of these Willy Eissert and Artur Diessner were fine artists. A government-subsidized school for engravers was opened at Orrefors in 1924, and there Gösta Elgström and Erik Åberg received their training. When enough skilled engravers had been trained, the school was closed, and since then the craft has been passed on to younger men by the older masters.

VII. GATE, HALD, LINDSTRAND

From the beginning, Gate and Hald expressed themselves in widely different styles. In 1918, Hald designed *Ball-playing Girls;* in 1919, Gate created *Oxen Heads. Ball-playing Girls* is a decorative composition of thin lines and surfaces; the technique resembles painting of the period. Hald chose elementary motifs, the line, the miter cutting, and light surface "frosting." His *Star Service* from 1918 is entirely composed of these straight lines with miter cuttings and spheres.

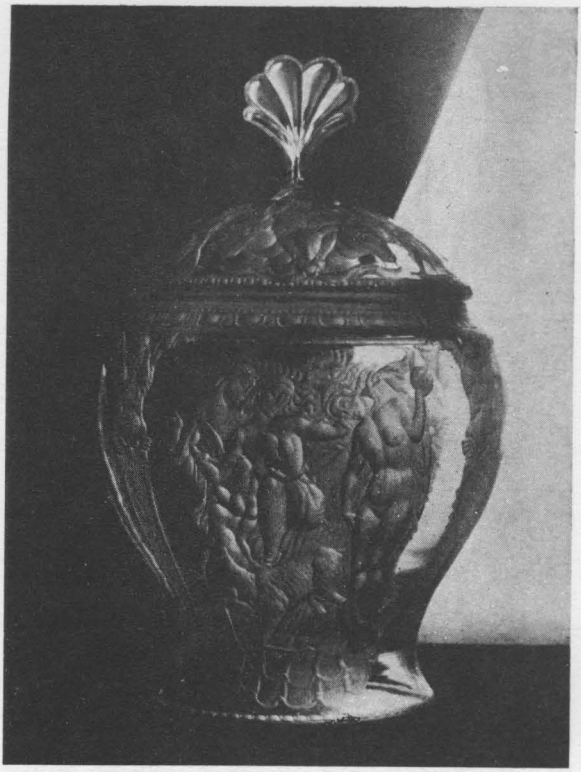
Gate's *Oxen Heads* in technique and expression is in direct contrast to Hald's work. With a strong feeling for details, Gate modeled female figures in the most graceful positions. His classic style showed the influence of the ancient cameo designs which had developed and flowered in Central Europe during the baroque period. Many pieces by Gate and Hald, which are now considered classics, were produced in the early 1920s in a style which distinguished the crafts and architecture of that time, when classicism appeared as reaction against national romanticism. This ex-



49. Ball-playing Girls, *an engraved bowl by Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1919. National Museum of Sweden.*

pression is especially marked in Gate's designs. In 1923, he decorated a covered urn with nudes, semi-draped figures, and palmetto trees, a striking example of the classicism of the time.

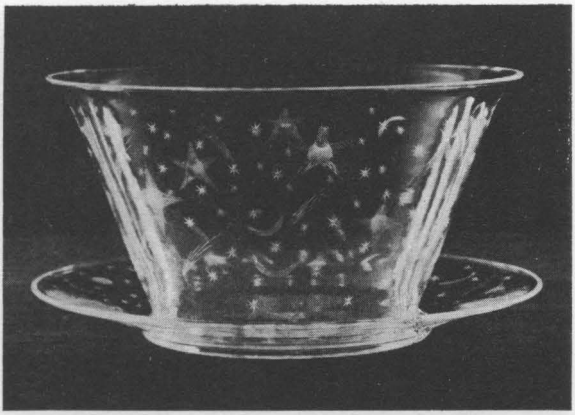
Hald displayed the same classic feeling in his early designs, although his artistry developed differently. His originality was most discernible when he let his fancy freely re-create an episode or a situation as a decorative motif. Hald belongs to that group of Swedish artists who studied under Matisse in Paris. He produced work which



50. Oxen Heads, *an engraved urn. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1923. Province of Småland Museum, Växjö.*

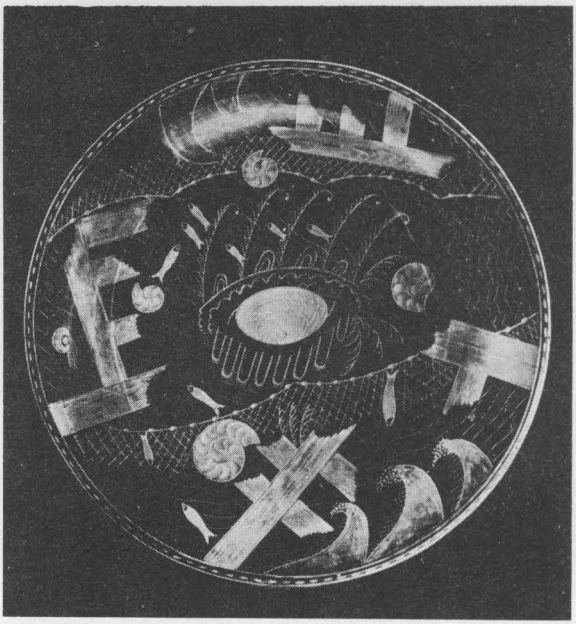
was refreshing, perhaps sometimes shocking, but always decorative.

One of the most perfect examples of Hald's artistic approach is his engraved platter, the *Broken Bridge,* an imaginative and figure-perfect



51. Engraved bowl and platter, in the Star pattern. Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1918.

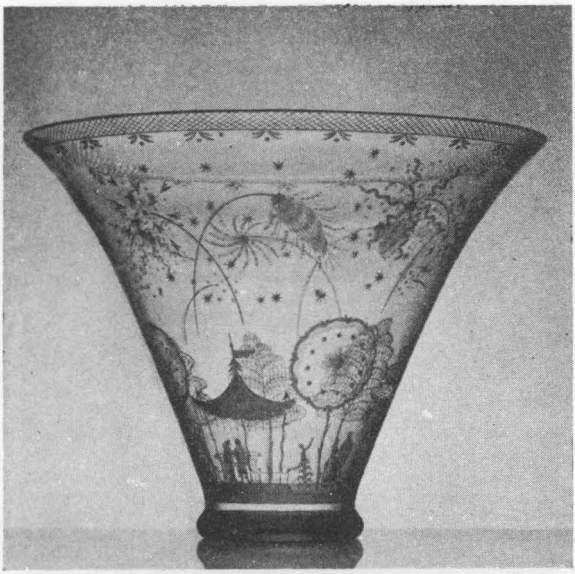
rendition of a theme from nature. A bridge has been smashed, terrified fish scurry in all directions, and torn nets sway in the current. Hald brings the whole episode to life with a dynamic symposium of wavy lines, angles, and circles. In the *Fireworks Bowl,* perhaps his most finished masterpiece, the rockets sparkle, crackle, and flash against the wide firmament, while little amused people wander about below among the toy trees and lovers' pavilions. Hald often showed his sense of humor in the way he combined form and décor; for instance he designed a bonbonnière in the form of a bathhouse with bathers peeping out the door. A covered urn reflects the face of a Spanish señorita. Her lace mantilla makes the cover and sedately drapes her



52. Engraved plate, The Broken Bridge. *Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1921.*

hair and forehead. The whole is topped by a little glass comb, which also serves as the knob.

From the Gothenburg Exposition in 1923, the fame of this new Orrefors glass spread over the country, but the renaissance of Swedish glass was only one manifestation of the changing tides in the nation's culture. Ragnar Östberg's City Hall was more than a monumental architectural creation. It was a cultural manifestation of a nation sailing in a fair wind. Carl Malmsten's furniture



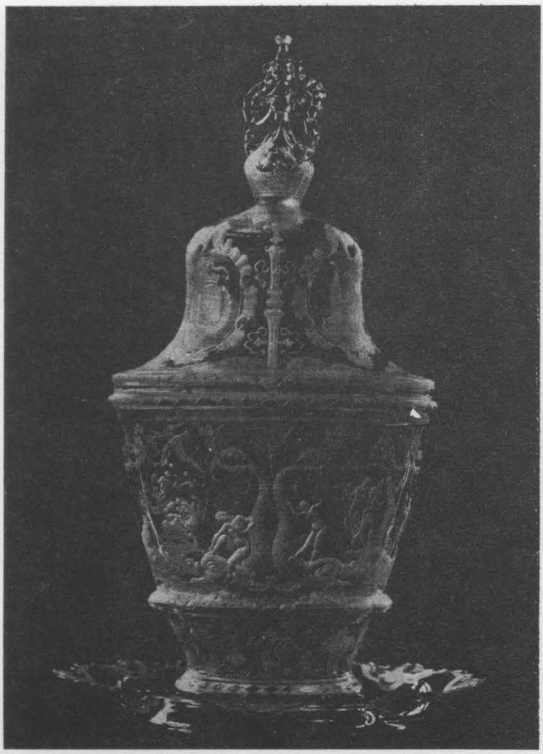
53. Engraved Fireworks Bowl. *Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1921.*

and Wilhelm Kåge's ceramics had their share in promoting Sweden's new industrial art abroad. This art was not only an evidence of a rise in the general standard of living, it was also a sign of a newly awakened love for the beautiful and ornamental.

Engraved Orrefors glass was a perfect manifestation of this love of splendor. Hald executed many handsome pieces as testimonial gifts during the 1920s. Royalty and distinguished persons in government and industry, both at home and abroad, received magnificent Gate-signed pieces,

54. Spanish Senorita, *engraved urn. Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1923.*

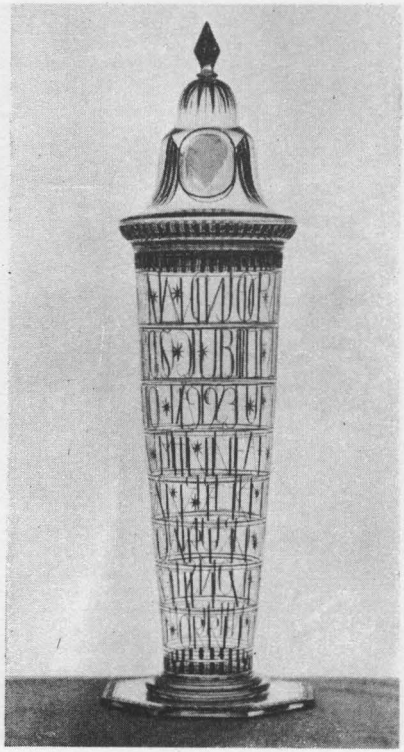
eloquent spokesmen for Sweden's artists and craftsmen. Exceeding them all, especially from a technical point of view, was a testimonial urn presented in 1922 to the city of Paris by the city of Stockholm. This heroic covered urn, nearly three feet high, was ornately designed by Gate with dolphins and dryads—symbols for cities



55. Engraved Paris Urn. *Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1922.*

situated on water. On the bowl were engraved allegorical themes, and the two cities were represented by two women, one bearing a crown, the other a lily. There is Venetian splendor in this historic piece.

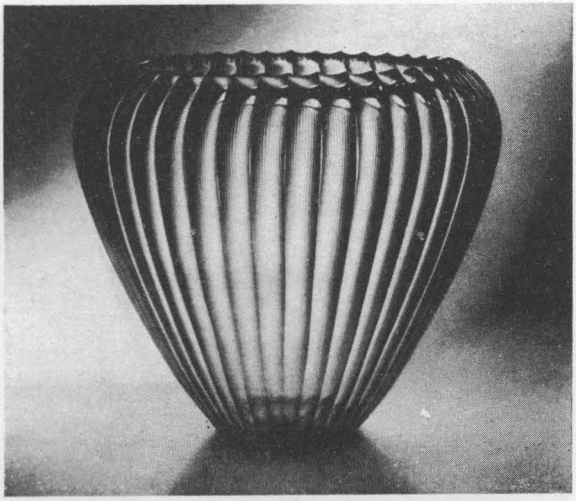
Hald's style did not lend itself to the grandeur of such presentation pieces. When occasionally he



56. Engraved and gilded urn, designed in mem ory of Consul Johan Ekman, Gothenburg. Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1923.

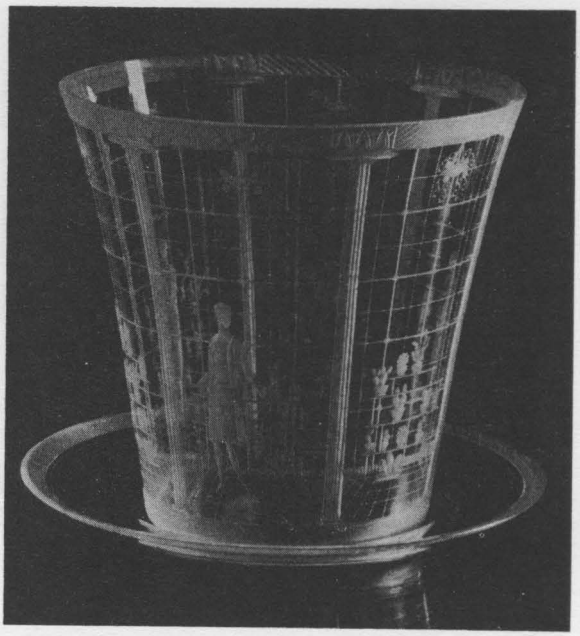
did design one, he depicted humorous episodes or displayed a more conventional aristocratic dignity.

At the Paris Exposition in 1925, the international reputation of Orrefors became firmly es-



57. Triton Vase *in violet cut glass. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1917.*

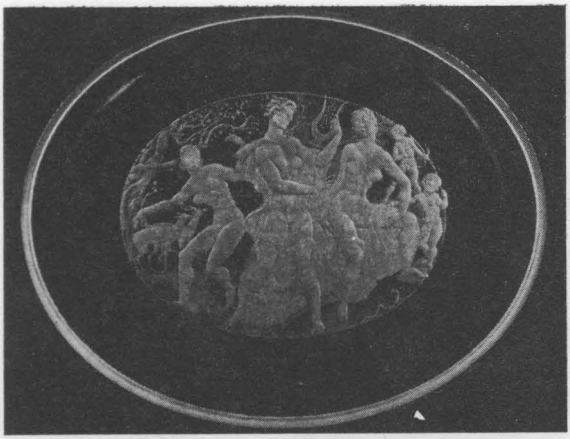
58. Hand-blown bowls in dark green "Palace Glass." Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1923.



59. Engraved bowl and platter, Cactus Growing. *Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1927.*

tablished. The French *maître verrier* Marinot enthused, "Il n'y a que ça." This remark was quite as valuable as the Grand Prix, also awarded to the Orrefors works.

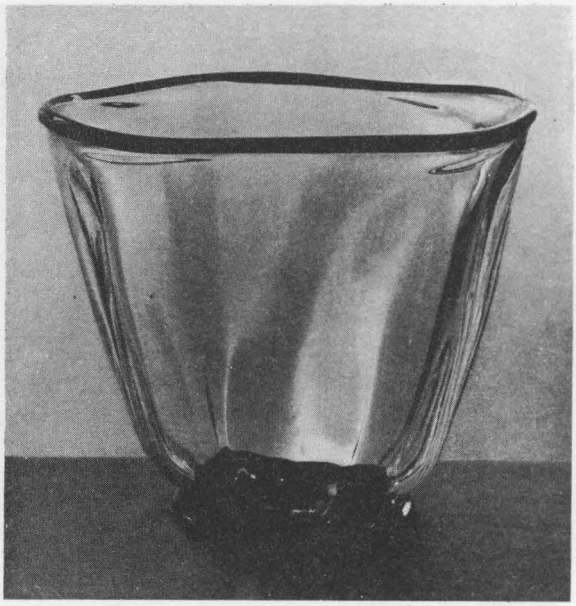
Toward the end of the 1920s, engraved glass became more technically perfect, the two leading artists retaining their individual styles. In 1927, Hald designed his famous *Cactus Growing.* The story told by the decoration is that the cactus was a popular plant, that women wore short narrow



60. Oval platter with center engraving. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1929.

skirts, and pulled cloche hats down over their eyes. Gate designed an oval platter about this time on which female figures, flowing draperies, and slender roe deer make a classic composition.

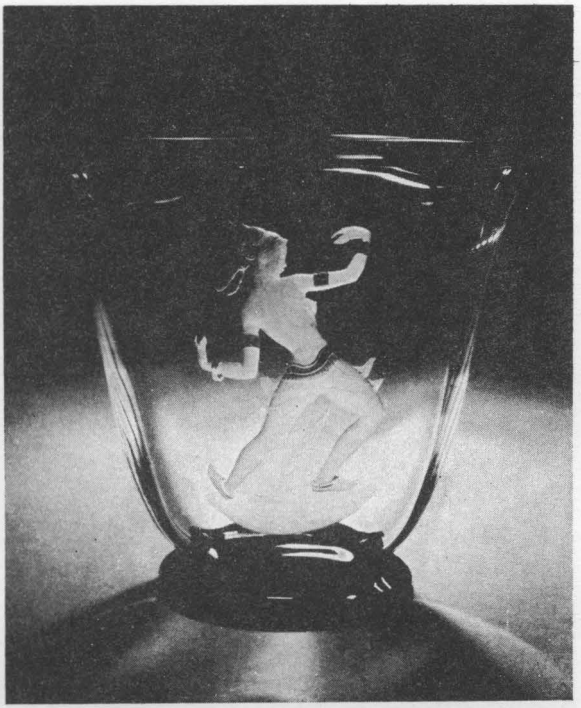
New trends in art glass, introduced at the Stockholm Exposition in 1930, were increasingly evident in Sweden's widening production. The changes were least noticeable in Hald's works, more so in Gate's, and most pronounced in those of Vicke Lindstrand, who had come to Orrefors in 1929. Heavy glass was replacing the thin type. Walls were often fluted and of uneven thickness. The glass itself became important. Interest shifted from pattern to material with emphasis on the property of glass to capture light and refract it in



61. Hand-blown vase with black rim and base. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1930.

brilliant rays. The first example of this new style was a hand-blown vase by Gate, with rim and foot in lustrous black. Hald's oval, thick-walled pipe bowls in grayish ware also fitted the new concept. In Gate's vase one could trace his development from the first simple pieces made in 1917. Then the glass was blown thin as a bubble; now it was treated as a thick, refractive mass.

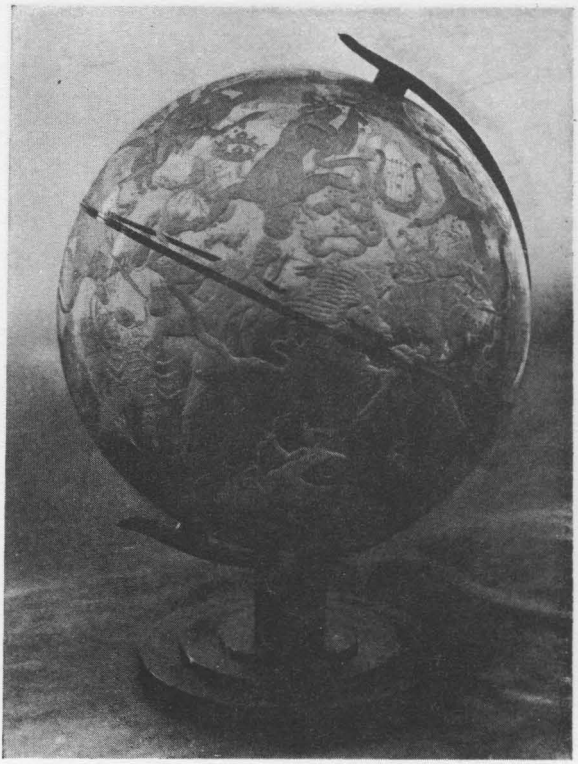
This new attitude did not belong to Sweden alone. In the 1920s, the leading artists of France —Marinot, Navarre, and Decorchemont—had



62. Javanese Dancer, *engraved vase. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1934.*

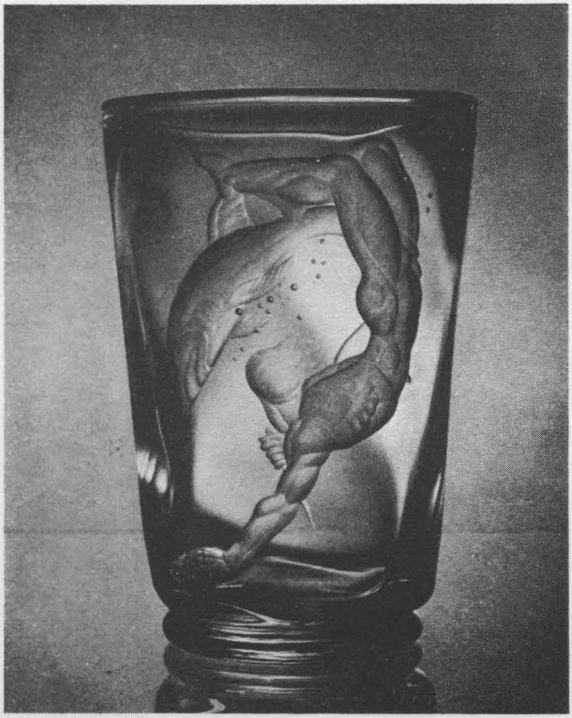
striven for effects with thick-walled, heavy-bodied forms, often using tinted glass or glass with bubbles or particles of color. At the Austrian artcraft exhibition held at Nordiska Kompaniet in 1929, similar thick-walled pieces were displayed by the Lobmeyer firm.

Engraving in Sweden was no longer designed to cover the entire surface of the glass, but was



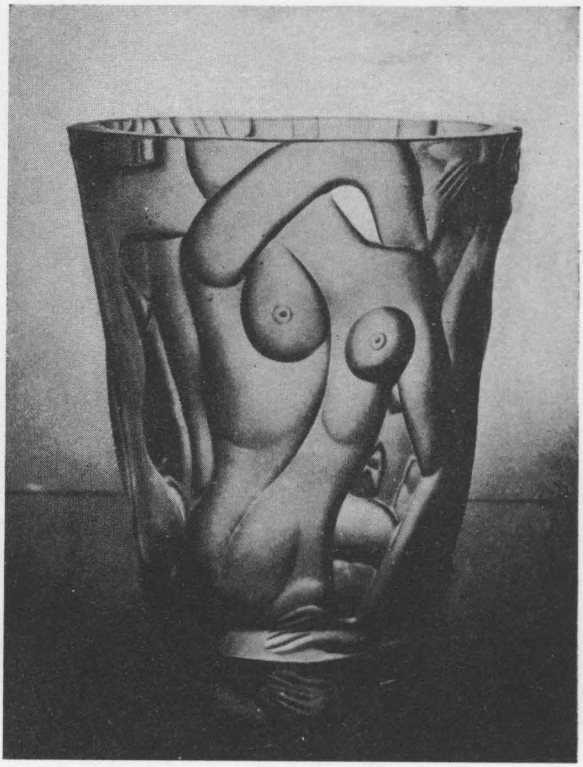
63. Engraved celestial globe. Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1930. National Museum of Sweden.

limited to single motifs, as in Gate's works. Where he had previously designed a frieze of cavorting figures, he now placed centrally a single figure and in a pose to harmonize with the form of the glass itself.



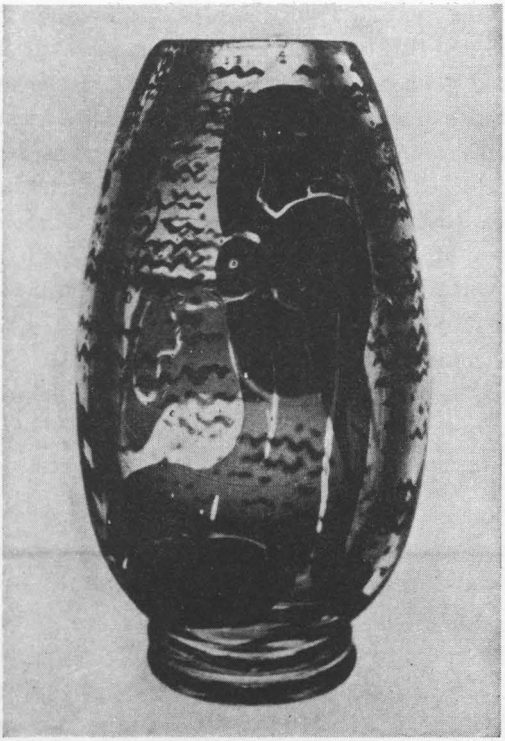
64. Shark Killer, *engraved vase. Vicke Lindstrand. Orrefors Glassworks, 1937.*

Meanwhile Hald retained the richly decorative style of *Circus* and the vastly ornamental *Celestial Globe.* In this piece, planets, stars, and signs of the Zodiac soar through the universe in an amusing mixture of conventional symbols and modern impressions.



65. Torso, *cut glass vase. Vicke Lindstrand. Orrefors Glassworks, 1937.*

Vicke Lindstrand's imagination gloried in the latent possibilities of thick undulating glass. In *Pearl Diver,* and later in the *Shark Killer,* naked divers with knives swirl through crystal-clear water. The illusion of movement is heightened by the billowing rhythm of the thick walls of



66. Thick-walled Graal glass with red-brown decoration Europe and the Bull. *Vicke Lindstrand. Orrefors Glassworks, 1937.*

glass. In the spherical vase *Boy with Soap Bubbles* and in *Torso,* motifs stand out in relief.

At this time both Lindstrand and Hald turned once more to the Graal technique. They applied a thick layer of clear glass to a layer of colored glass, the pattern of which was reflected in a

striking play of color. One of Lindstrand's first pieces of this type was *Europa and the Bull.* The Graal glass, which earlier had been of the most delicate tints came out in the 1930s in clearer, deeper tones. In fact, color of glass was seriously considered, even on plain and engraved pieces. Gate designed a square platter in which the nuances of the engraving shimmer through the brownish gray tone of the metal itself. This piece was shown at the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930 and similar pieces followed. The use of black glass, sometimes added for a border, sometimes as a base for an untinted piece, was now replaced by similar combinations of clear and green glass.

VIII. ÖHRSTRÖM, LANDBERG, PALMQVIST

New trends at Orrefors were often introduced at the large expositions. At Paris in 1937 appeared the heavy Graal glass and also Ariel glass. This new ware, which is still so popular, resembles Graal, but differs in using bubbles as part of decoration. Strewn around figures and ornamental details or arranged in a lustrous pearly band, bubbles add a scintillating touch to every piece.

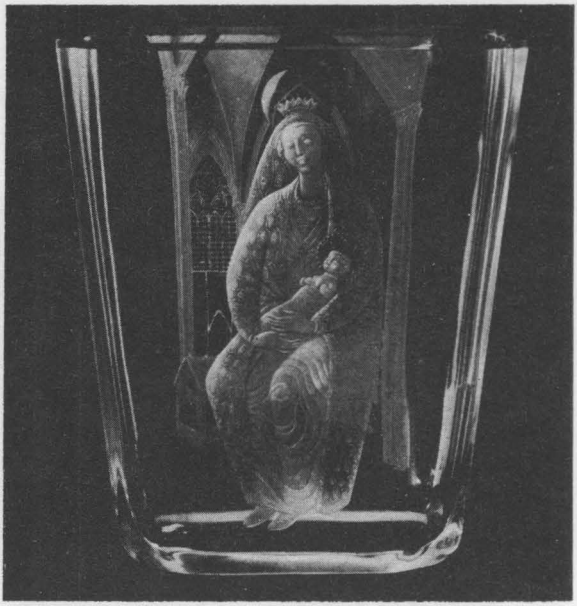
In 1936 a new talent came to Orrefors when the noted sculptor, Edvin Öhrström, was engaged. It is he who is master of the Ariel technique. In heavy impressive vases he encases figure compositions, heads, and flowers. Rich coloring combined with the silvery gleam of air bubbles give these creations in glass the beauty of gleaming jewels.

Edvin Öhrström was the father of another technique. He perfected glass turning, which made it possible to produce heavy vases and bowls with rounded rims. Reflecting his sculptural talents, his turned platters, bowls, and bottles in massive

67. Ariel glass with red anl blue decoration. Edvin Öhrström. Orrefors Glassworks, 1938.

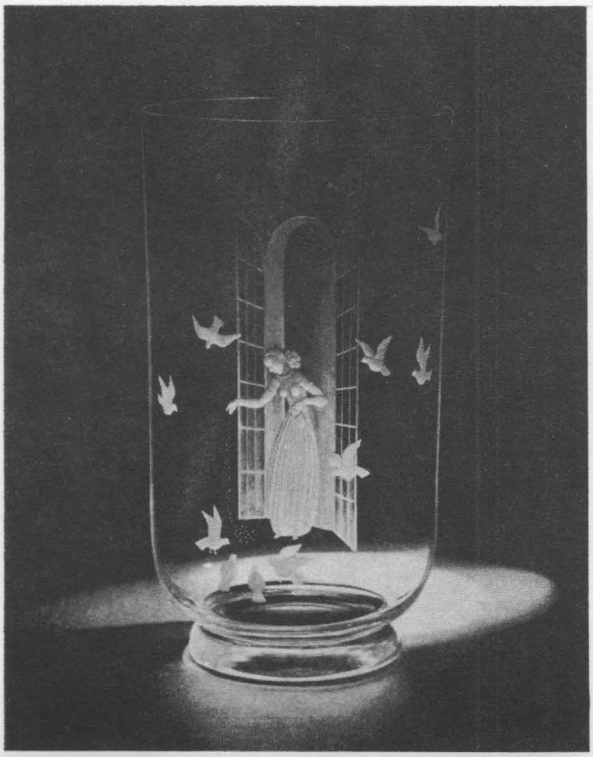
68. Iced Ariel glass with decoration in shades of yellow and green. Edvin Öhrström. Orrefors Glassworks, 1942.

69. Turned and cut flask and vase. Edvin Öhrström. Orrefors Glassworks, 1938.



70. The Madonna, *engraved vase. Sven Palmqvist. Orrefors Glassworks, 1942.*

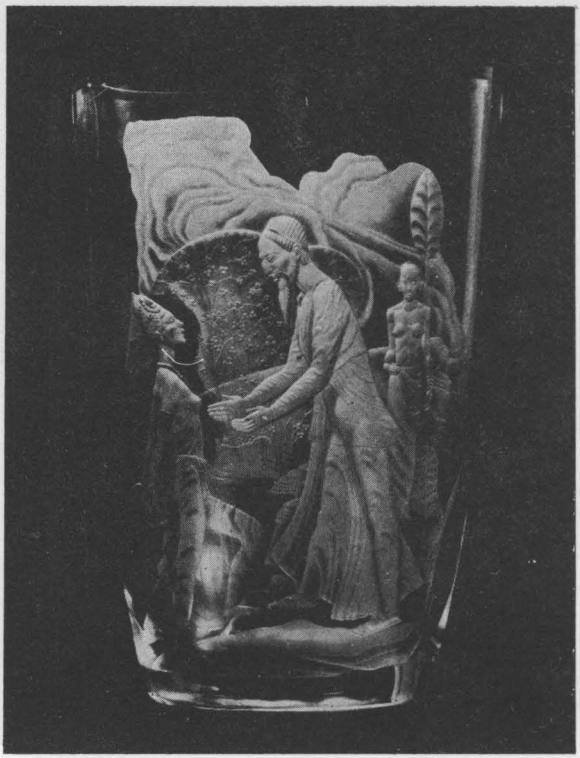
71. Mother and Child, *high-relief vase with decoration. Sven Palmqvist. Orrefors Glassworks, 1937.*



72. Cinderella, *engraved vase. Nils Landberg. Orrefors Glassworks, 1938.*

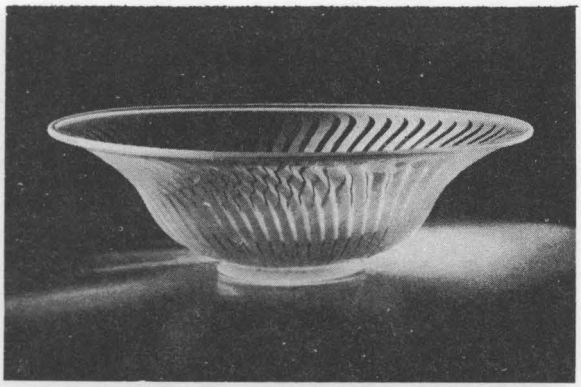
lustrous forms have been produced in a long series.

The well-known artists, Nils Landberg and Sven Palmqvist, joined Orrefors in the 1930s. To them, as to other artists, the company has granted freedom to develop their talents. Palmqvist's sketches have resulted in delicate classical en-



73. King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, *engraved vase. Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1938.*

gravings, such as the *Madonna.* His experiments in high relief engraving produced in 1937 the exquisite vase, *Mother and Child.* Landberg worked with hand-blown as well as with engraved glass. His elegant designs take advantage

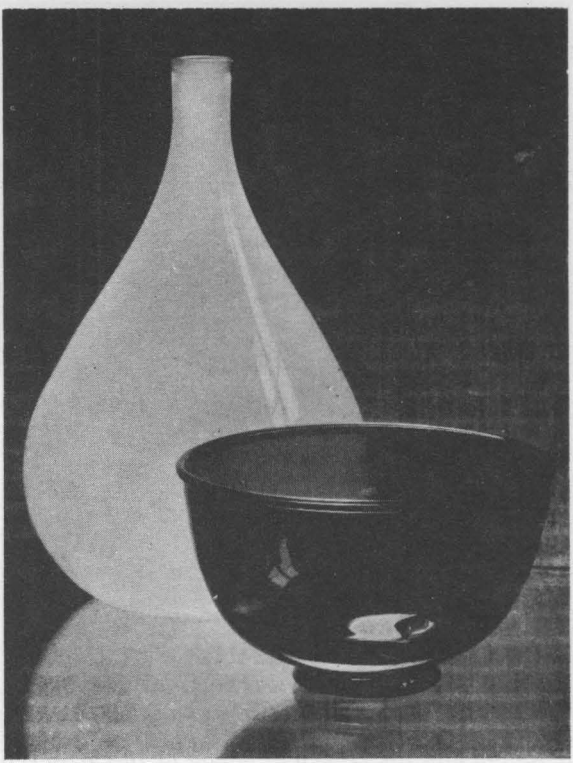


74. Bowl of Graal cut glass with white opalescent ribbing. Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1942.

of the transparency of glass and decorations appear against the background of motifs opposite to them.

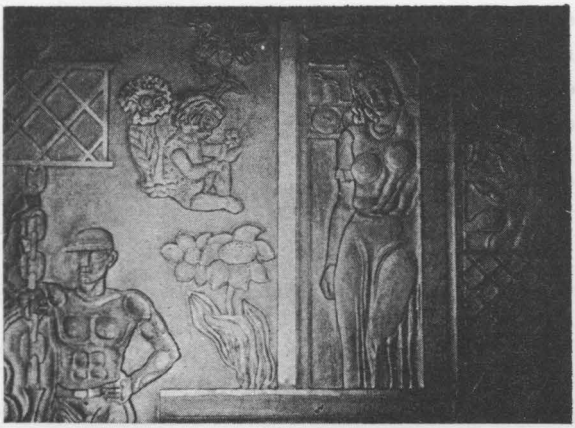
Glass of uneven thickness gradually became less popular; uniformity was again accepted. The main interest was in the rich shadings of engraving. Gate's *Masquerade* is a masterpiece, and in *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba* he has achieved in glass an atmosphere of oriental splendor. Unlike the previous decade, presentation pieces of the thirties were naturalistic rather than classic, as in the vase given to Sweden's beloved novelist, Selma Lagerlöf. Her well-known fictional character, Nils Holgersson astride the flying goose, is engraved as a central motif.

When Edward Hald became managing director at Orrefors in 1933, his artistic activities were



75. Hand-blown white opalescent vase by Simon Gate; gray-blue bowl by Edward Hald. Orrefors Glassworks, 1942.

limited by other responsibilities. It was not until the 1940s that he was again able to devote himself to art. Meanwhile he was concerned with Graal glass, and his fine hand sometimes turned



76. Glass window decorated by Edvin Öhrström for the Halmstad Courthouse. Orrefors Glassworks, 1938.

to the designing of testimonial gifts. Besides ornamental pieces, artists at Orrefors were busy designing various kinds of household goods, some of which were manufactured at the Sandvik subsidiary. At the Orrefors Jubilee Exhibition held in the Swedish National Museum in 1942, new ideas in hand-blown glass were displayed. Among these were handmade bowls and vases with clean, simple lines and in exquisite tints of deep blue and violet with glowing opalescent tones.

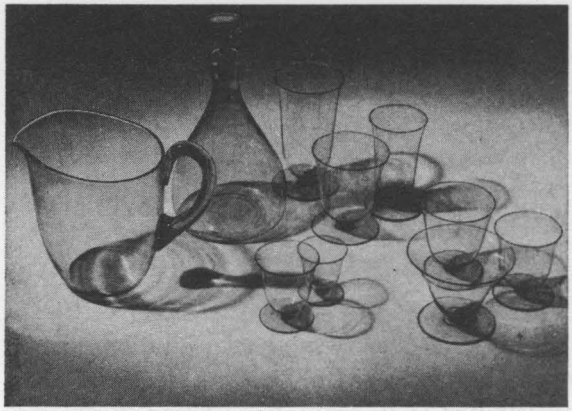
The appreciation of monumental decorative art, noticeable in the 1930s, was also reflected in other fields of glassmaking. For Gothenburg's new Concert House, Gate, Hald, and Lindstrand

designed in 1935 richly decorated windows, each reflecting the artist's own style. Decorative windows for public buildings, churches, industrial establishments, and banks were also made by Palmqvist, Öhrström and other Orrefors artists. They designed lighting fixtures as well.

IX. OLLERS, NYBLOM, HULTSTRÖM

While Orrefors was the inspiration of the renaissance of Sweden's glass, other works also contributed to its reputation abroad. Kosta concentrating on more attractive practical wares engaged the artist, Edvin Ollers, as head designer, but he remained but a short time and in 1918 went to the Reijmyre Glassworks. There he worked mainly on useful articles, although he produced some decorative pieces in green and bluish gray tones.

In 1926, Ollers went to the Elme works and concentrated on heavy glass with linear designs, frosted grooves, and flat-cut panels. He also experimented with pressed glass. Gotthard Johansson, one of Sweden's foremost art critics, described this in 1930: "It is symmetrical in form, tasteful in decoration, and because of its low price has realized the ideal—beauty with use." At Limmared, where Ollers worked in 1930, he continued to make attractive articles of molded glass, especially perfume bottles. Toward the end of the thirties Ollers worked at Åfors, developing

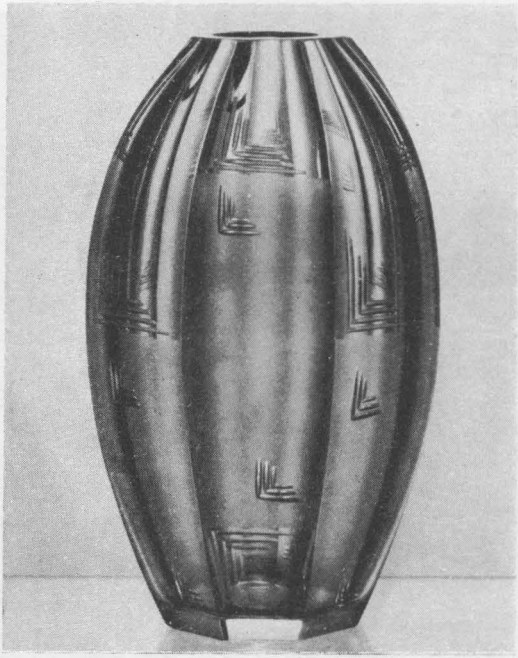


77. Tableware by Simon Gate. Orrefors Glassworks, 1929.

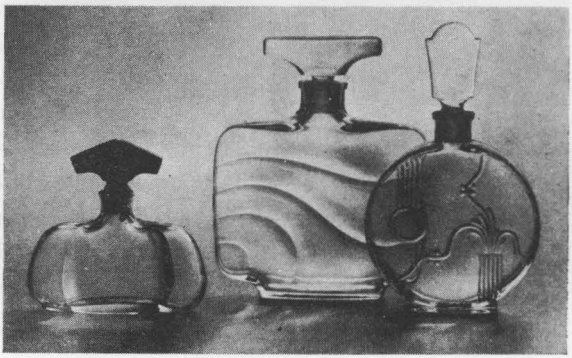
his designs in a thick often cloudy and bubbly mass.

Meanwhile at Kosta, after Ollers had left, Lennart Nyblom and Karl Hultström were engaged to carry on the creative work there. Nyblom experimented with several techniques; Hultström was concerned with designs for engraving. When Kosta sponsored a contest for designers in connection with the Gothenburg exhibition in 1923, first prize was won by Karlström and Sven Erixon, who together designed and engraved an urn. Sten Branzell, a noted architect, and formerly art consultant at the Swedish Crystal Works, joined Kosta's staff in 1930. Branzell also collaborated with Axel Törneman on an enormous urn which

78. Tableware by Simon Gate. Orrefors Glass-works, 1935.



79. Cut glass vase by Edvin Ollers. Elme Glassworks, 1926.



80. Pressed perfume bottles by Edvin Ollers. Limmared Glassworks, 1930.

81. City Hall Urn, *dark green and hand-blown by Sten Branzell and Azel Thörneman. Reijmyre Glassworks, 1923.*

was made at the Reijmyre Glassworks. This was presented to the city of Stockholm at the time of the inauguration of the City Hall in 1923.

Another Kosta artist, Ewald Dahlskog, engaged in the 1920s, had his first public showing in 1926. His was a new and very personal style. With

82. Cut glass bowl by Ewald Dahlskog. Kosta Glassworks, 1927.

expert cutting he produced unconventional patterns and scenes. He utilized the gleaming furrows of cut glass for fanciful animal and bird motifs, for flames, and waves. Although enthusiastically received by the critics, his works did not noticeably affect artistic development at Kosta's,

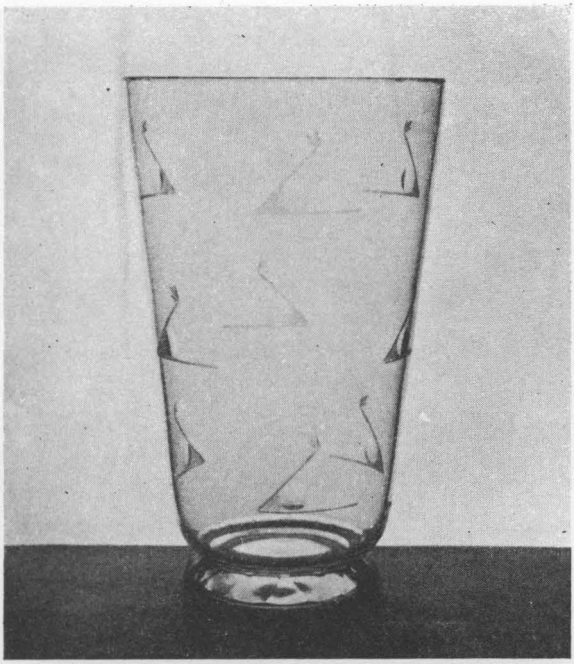
X. SKAWONIUS, ELIS BERGH, AND THE STRÖMBERGS

In 1934 and 1935, Sven Erik Skawonius made an interesting contribution to Kosta with his unconventional designs worked out in cut glass, often combined with etching and sand-blasting. [a method of blowing coarse sand against the glass and applying a design through a soft rubber stencil.—Translator.] In the contrast of polished and dull surfaces, of rough cutting and fine etching, he produced effects similar to those of contemporary painting. He also combined opaque and transparent glass with great artistry.

One outstanding artist remained at Kosta from 1929 up to the present time. Elis Bergh, a talented architect, was active in many arts before he became interested in glass designing. His first pieces, exhibited in Stockholm in 1930, were not enthusiastically received; his thin-walled glass seemed unruly in design with its angles, circles, and zigzag lines, but there was the purity of form, later the characteristic of Bergh's work. His style developed when he worked with thick glass, on which he cut flutes or slender ovals to refract the

83. Etched and cut vase by Sven Erik Skawonius. Kosta Glassworks, 1934.

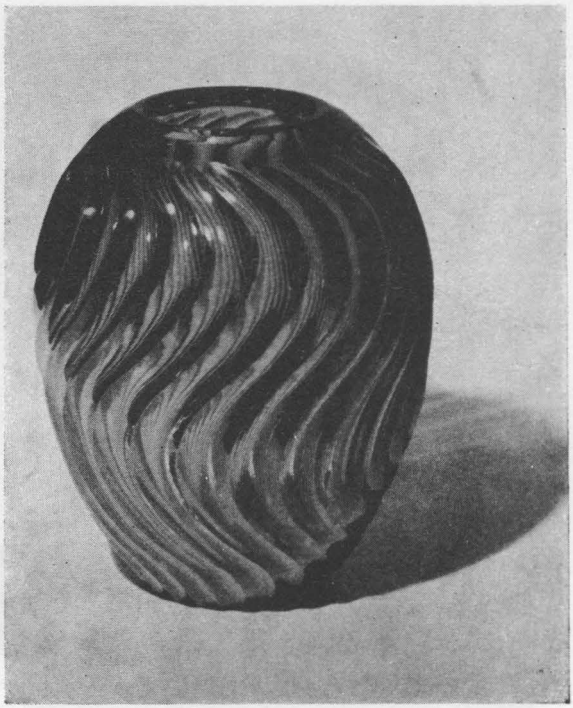
light. His forms and designs in cut glass are among Sweden's best. Bergh also was concerned with useful wares. He made sets of cut glass and designed engraved table services with sparse geometrical decorations surrounding the glass like a loose-meshed net.



84. Cut glass vase by Elis Bergh. Kosta Glassworks, 1930.

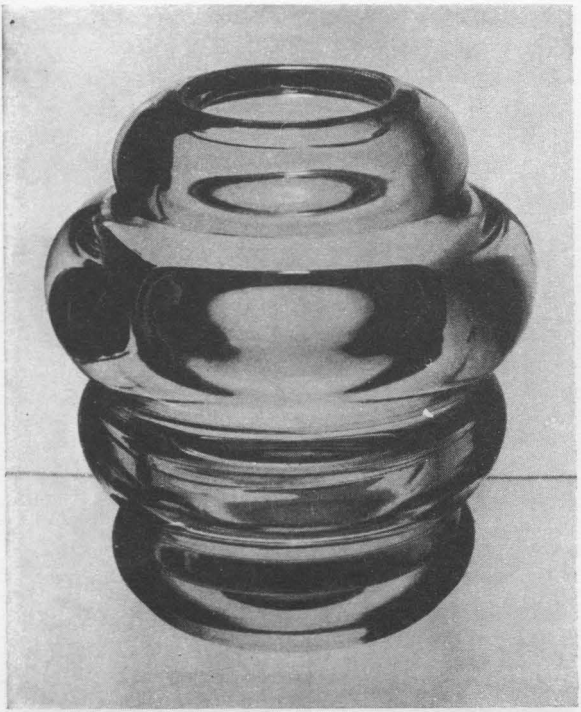
In the modern art of Swedish glassmaking, Edvard Strömberg's name is synonymous with technical skill and a burning enthusiasm for craftsmanship. Through the years he learned every phase of his art at Orrefors, the Swedish Crystal Works, the Eda Glassworks, and finally at the concern which now bears his name.

Strömberg's personal contribution to Sweden's glass is technical. When he took over the Eda



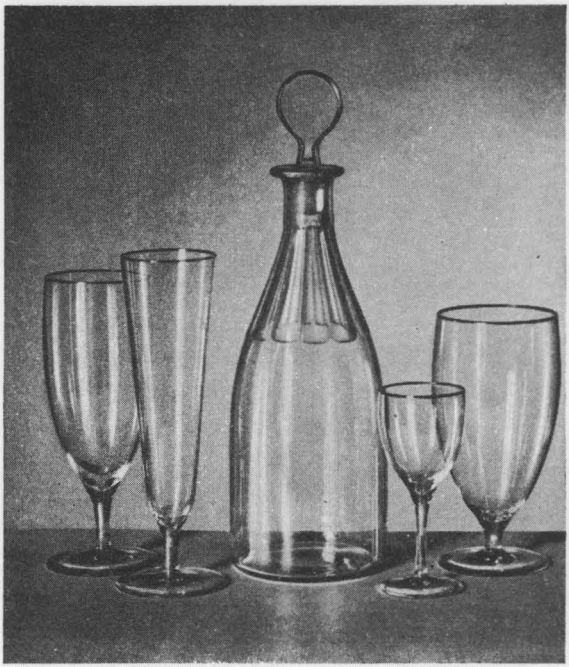
85. Cut glass vase by Elis Bergh. Kosta Glassworks, 1931.

works in 1927, he also assumed responsibility for the artistic quality of the glass made there. To his wife, Gerda Strömberg, fell the task of creating a distinctive style for this glass. When the Strömbergs began working at Eda, they did not compete with Orrefors or with Kosta, but devoted themselves to the production of quality cut glass.



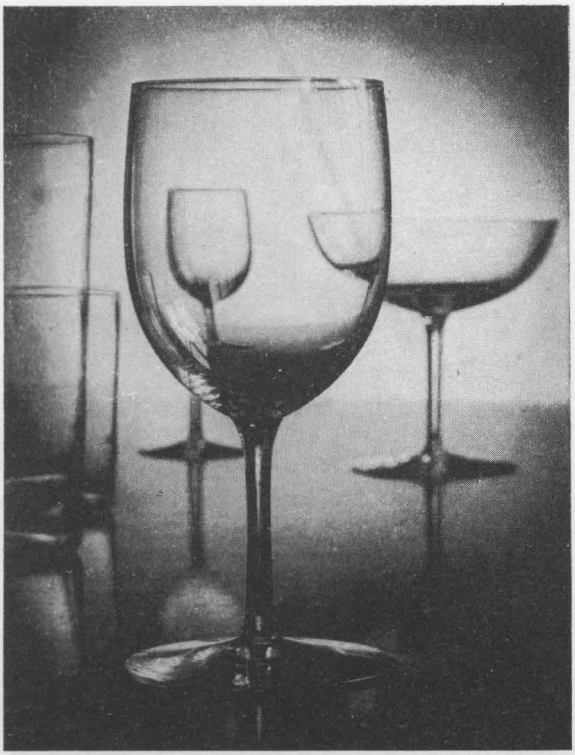
86. Hand-blown vase. Elis Bergh. Kosta Glassworks, 1934.

Their first pieces were displayed in the summer of 1928, and at the Stockholm Exposition in 1930 a rich collection was shown. There were shallow bowls, beakers, and urns, some pieces elaborately cut, others graceful and unadorned. The glass was often tinted yellow or gray. Since the Strömbergs moved to their now-famous Strömbergshyttan, Gerda Strömberg has empha-



87. "Variety" table service by Elis Bergh. Kosta Glassworks, 1930.

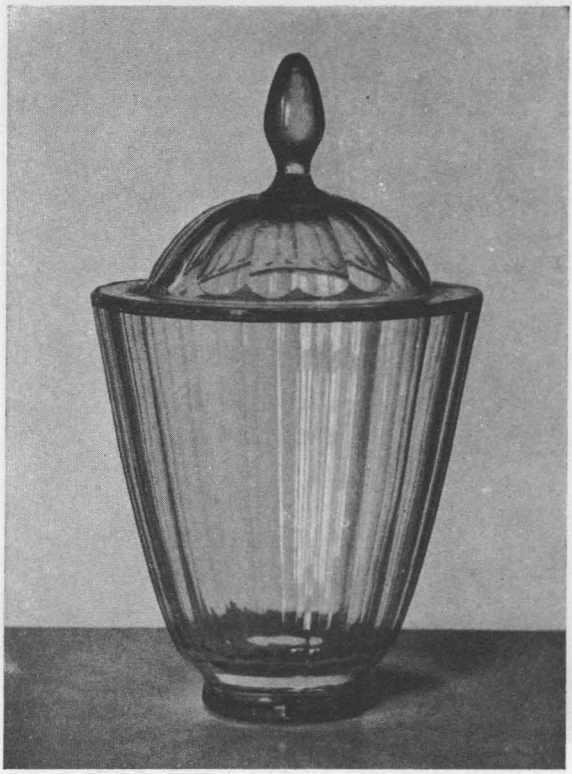
sized the style she originated at Eda. Her later designs are simple, softly rounded forms which impart exceptional beauty to the glass itself. Her heavy glass of faint gray-blue has a delicate luster, sometimes accentuated by a rim, obliquely cut to form a broad gleaming band. Among utility sets brought out at Eda have been some plain and handcrafted pieces, also some that are cut in



88. Plain stemware by Elis Bergh. Kosta Glassworks, 1942.

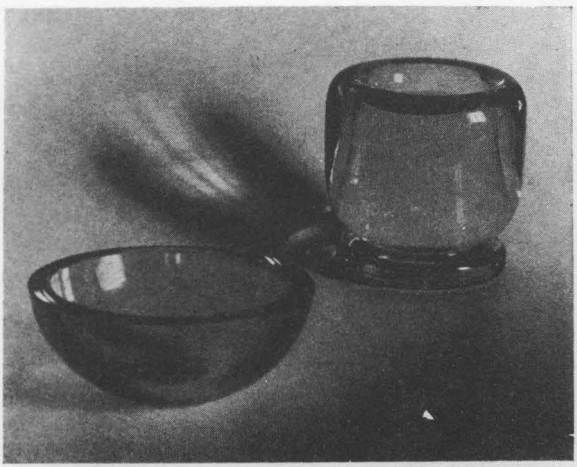
the old English style of design. Whether decorative or useful, the products of Strömbergshyttan are eloquent examples of the craft of glassmaking.

These various outstanding glassworks have, in turn, given inspiration to many smaller concerns, which today are producing glass pleasing in form



89. Yellow bonbon dish in cut glass by Gerda Strömberg. Eda Glassworks, 1930.

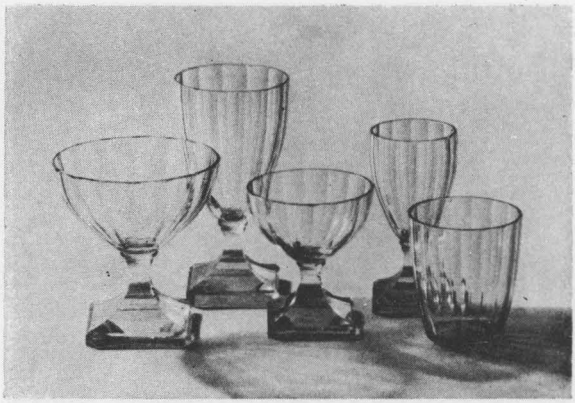
and decoration. Sometimes this simply copies designs from the larger works; more often the pieces are the original work of competent artists. For instance, the Pukeberg works have had Harald Notini as designer from time to time. At Måleråas, where glass is made for the Swedish Union of Cooperative Societies, Kalle Loden and



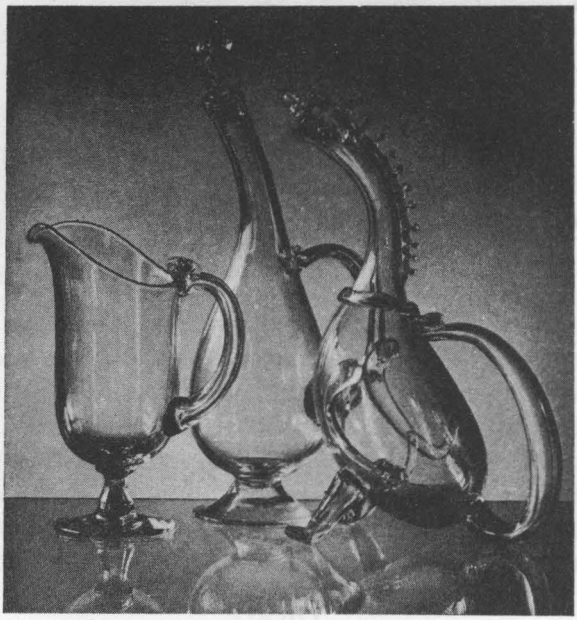
90. Bowl and vase by Gerda Strömberg. Strömbergshyttan Glassworks, 1934 and 1936.

Georg Scherman have produced glass of distinction. At the same works, Erik Ahlsen designed a delicately engraved testimonial piece for Rickard Sandler, former member of the cabinet and now a provincial governor.

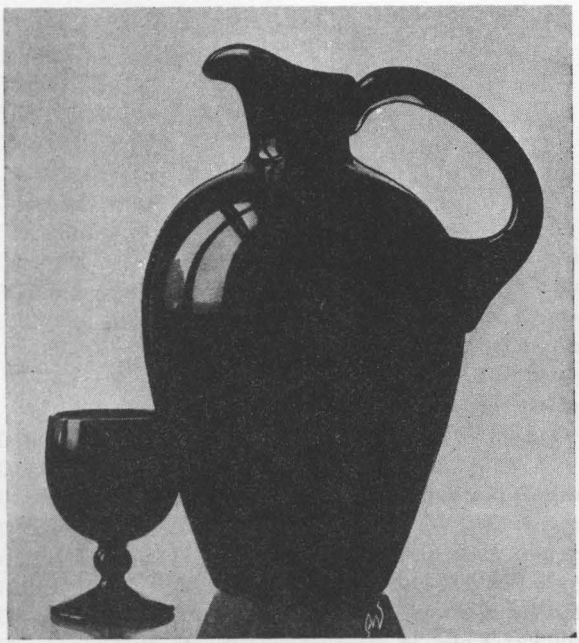
At Gullaskruf, Hugo Gehlin, in collaboration with William Stenberg, designs hand-blown glass in a rustic and traditional style. He has made brandy glasses and decanters in amusing shapes and decorated with handles and curlicues. At Ekenäs Glassworks, Greta Runeborg-Tell has designed simple bowls, vases, and urns in a thick blue-tinted medium. At the Reijmyre works, Monica Bratt has made handsome pieces of clear blue or deep red.



91. Cut glass ware by Gerda Strömberg. Strömbergshyttan Glassworks, 1935.



92. Hand-blown pitchers by Hugo Gehlin. Gullaskruf Glassworks.



93. Dark blue glass and pitcher. Monica Bratt. Reijmyre Glassworks.

The Swedish glass tradition born nearly three centuries ago, in the days of the elegant Kungsholm works, has been well preserved in modern times. True, many of the artistic trends which have emanated from large and small concerns, have been sporadic and have not always reached the heights. However, an important and always positive contribution has been made by Swedish glassmakers, who have often taken great financial risk to encourage new talents in their search for aesthetic and practical values.

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